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**EXPLORING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP IN DECISION-MAKING
PROCESSES**

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

App	Applications (mobile)
CofP	Community of Practice
CMC	Computer-mediated communication
DL	Distributed leadership
DM	Decision-making
HE	Higher education
HOD	Head of Department
IM	Instant messaging
LWP	Language in the Workplace Project
M1	Meeting 1
M2	Meeting 2
M3	Meeting 3
M4	Meeting 4
RQ	Research questions
TP	Teaching placement
SOP	School Orientation Program
WA	WhatsApp

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DECLARATION

I confirm that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

ABSTRACT

Despite the increased interest in an alternative constellation of leadership, scholarship dedicated to this intriguing area is still scarce, particularly from a qualitative research perspective. Moreover, much current leadership research still utilises rather 'less critical' functionalist and interpretive methodological tools such as questionnaires, surveys and interviews (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014). This study addresses these issues by taking a discourse analytical approach, providing insights into how participants challenge, negotiate and exert influence in the enactment of distributed leadership (henceforth DL) and the achievement of shared objectives. A particular focus is on how decisions and decision-making (henceforth DM) are constructed and negotiated.

This research is situated within the tradition of social constructionism and analyses DL at the micro-level of interaction. Drawing on evidence of leadership from DM discussions that take place in team meetings and WhatsApp messages, the study shows that leadership roles are distributed among members of different positions, and all members contribute to and display leadership by enacting, negotiating and ratifying decisions in these different interactional contexts. Using various discourse strategies, all members take on leadership roles when and if they possess authority, knowledge or experience of the issues raised. It could therefore be suggested that the various processes of DM talk that these members are engaging in are reflections of the DL practices observed in the team and thus constitutive of their acceptable workplace norms.

This thesis contributes to the existing scholarship on two levels; theoretically and methodologically. Theoretically, it illuminates the significance of legitimising leadership attempts made by ordinary members, and methodologically, it contributes to the examination of leadership in virtual contexts. It is hoped that the empirical evidence provided in this study thereby mediate the current theorisations of leadership.

1.1 Getting started

‘Calls for more leadership are everywhere’ (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014: 2). Leadership has been a fast-growing and much researched topic. It has received attention from a diverse range of disciplines, including management and organisational sciences, psychology and sociology, and relatively recently the field of applied linguistics. Considering the diversity and complexity of leadership, leadership research has undergone dramatic changes and has produced insightful perspectives and theories, ranging from traditional to critical perceptions of leadership. Early research into leadership took a traditional perspective, focusing on the traits and cognitive realms of human endeavours. Leadership has been conceptualised mainly in respect to the behavioural traits of particular individuals, most often formally labelled ‘leaders’, who claim to directly influence team performance. As studies of leadership progressed, the views of leadership developed, moving beyond these attributions to emphasise communication processes. Relational work, contextual factors and collaborative leadership practices between the formal leaders and the ordinary members have become the main focus, and such an approach challenges the notion of heroic leadership ‘that sustain[s] individualist and authoritarian leadership norms’ (Crevani, Lindgren and Packendorff, 2010: 78).

Relatively recently, leadership studies have taken a discursive turn, i.e. ‘a key early move by the communication sciences’ (Fairhurst, 2007: 511) to examine the social co-construction and negotiation of leadership in interaction (ibid.). Originating from Fairhurst’s early work (2007), discursive leadership is conceptualised as a dynamic social process vis-à-vis the crucial role of language in workplace communication. Recent studies that advocate for this view have provided empirical evidence on the crucial importance of investigating leadership from a language perspective (Clifton,

2012; Choi and Schnurr, 2014; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017; Wilson, 2017). Discourse is claimed to be an important aspect in examining how leadership is enacted, acknowledging the fact that the members of a workplace spend much time interacting with each other. Rather than depending on quantitative data of leadership, such an endeavour analyses the processes through which leadership is enacted at the interaction level, bringing a range of everyday and mundane talks that occur at workplaces to the fore.

Acknowledging that language is at the heart of the leadership process, there is a need for leadership to be investigated from a linguistic perspective to uncover the dynamics and various strategies involved in achieving leadership (Clifton, 2012; Choi and Schnurr, 2014; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017; Wilson, 2017). Following the linguistic approach to leadership that values interactions and contexts when analysing leadership, this study goes beyond viewing leadership as the enactment of tangible behavioural traits that are deeply rooted in psychological perspectives. Rather, this study focuses on the actual processes by examining mundane workplace talks, through which leadership is enacted and created in everyday talk at work. This thesis critically asks 'how' leadership is done and shifts the attention to 'who else' is involved and contributed to the complexities and dynamics of the leadership process. In line with previous researches that have captured leadership processes in authentic workplace settings (Clifton, 2012; Choi and Schnurr, 2014; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017; Wilson, 2017), the current study contributes to qualitative research perspectives on leadership by providing insights into how the participants challenge, negotiate and exert influence in the enactment of leadership and the achievement of shared objectives.

1.2 Leadership: challenges, criticisms and gaps

In this section, I discuss some of the issues that mainstream leadership scholarship is currently 'grappling' with (Schnurr and Schroeder, 2018: 12) and demonstrate how this study fits into these debates. I also address the gaps in the field of leadership and discourse analysis that are potentially filled by this research.

1.2.1 Methodological issues

Day (2013: 14) claims:

[L]eadership research was so poorly designed and the construct itself so nebulous and ill-defined that it was thought (at least by some) that there was nothing to be gained from further research.

While leadership research is diverse and widely covered in various fields, many proponents of critical leadership studies express the view that the amount of research in the field is vast but unorganised. In 'The Future of Leadership', Day (2014), outlines his concern over the apparent limitations of leadership research, and emphasises the challenges and shortcomings facing this field. He laments that organisational leadership studies have produced theories, methods and styles that are loosely constructed and merely serve as an addition to the current literature. For instance, leadership styles such as authentic leadership, ethical leadership and servant leadership are redundant within existing leadership constructs (e.g. transformational leadership) and, consequently, do not add value to the understanding of leadership. Research into the field of organisational leadership styles is 'simply placing a new but related leadership construct' (ibid.: 2) into the mix, and thus, Day argues, does not contribute anything new to the field of leadership. Likewise, Alvesson and Spicer (2014: 8) ascertain that 'a variety of different approaches may seem confusing or as little more than varied attempts to carve up the field'. Such a criticism is applicable to mainstream research that has been carried out into leadership; this field of research has been criticised for relying on functionalist and interpretive frameworks, and individual leaders' charisma, abilities and action, thus isolating the leadership phenomenon from its cultural context (Crevani et al., 2010; Alvesson and Spicer, 2014).

One of the reasons for this 'disconcerting trend of leadership' is the over reliance on quantitative methods that fail to accurately reflect leadership behaviour. Day (2014: 6) strongly notes that 'researchers are fooling themselves if they believe that responses to leadership questionnaires accurately reflect observed leader behaviour

and only leader behaviour'. Leadership is taken out of context and social forces, remain highly leader- centered, and the views collected in interviews reported by the interviewees do not challenge discourses of leadership. Self- rated questionnaire, on the other hand, require respondents to quickly categorise responses thus posing erroneous assumptions of accuracy. Such methods, which is relatively prevalent in mainstream leadership research (Manz and Sims, 1991; Northouse, 2007), illustrate that, after several decades of researching leadership, researchers still 'seem content to ask smaller and smaller questions about fewer and fewer issues of genuine significance, producing new approaches of the blindingly obvious and palpably absurd' (Tourish, 2015: 137). With such criticisms, we witness the mainstream leadership studies as unorganised, and 'dead as a scholarly discipline' (Day, 2014: 6) and researchers are 'desperately looking for new approaches, new ideas, new questions, as well as new answers to old questions' (Schnurr and Schroeder, 2018: 2). The claims put forth by both Tourish and Day are particularly important if we want to gain new insights into capturing the complex phenomenon of leadership.

In addressing this issue, leadership studies need to re-approach leadership from a different methodological perspective. Align with critical leadership scholarship that aspire to 'denaturalize and examine leadership reflexively' (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014: 1) and challenge hegemonic views of leadership (Tourish and Jackson, 2008; Crevani et al., 2010; Ladkin, 2010; Larsson and Lundholm, 2010; Alvesson and Spicer, 2014), there is a strong need for methodological overhauls to explore the processes of how leadership is done between the leaders and the other members. My thesis puts forward a discourse analytical approach as a way of addressing the shortcomings presented. In line with other discourse analysts, pragmatists and sociolinguists in leadership discourse (Mullany, 2007; Clifton, 2012; 2017; Baxter, 2014; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017; Schnurr, 2018), this study continues to acknowledge leadership as a socially constructed and discursive phenomenon, in order to explore the intricate processes of leadership and to identify how leadership is actually done.

My study investigates leadership within a non-traditional organisational team, considering how decision-making (henceforth DM) episodes unfold the complexities and dynamics of leadership. By the term non-traditional, I refer to an alternative

leadership constellation that shifts its focus from specific individuals enacting leadership to investigating leadership activities that are performed by several members through various discourse strategies (Mullany, 2007; Vine et al., 2008; Schnurr and Chan, 2011; Clifton, 2012; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). Through this approach, my study engages with criticisms posed by critical leadership studies, while offering real-life data that feed into leadership debates. Subsequently, this study elucidates the importance of a discourse analysis approach, illuminating how this methodology could be utilised to explore the dynamics of leadership in a much 'more critical and dialectical way' (Collinson, 2017: 279), crossing disciplinary boundaries by engaging in several hotly debated issues to continue bringing 'fresh air to current leadership research' (Schnurr and Schroeder, 2018: 2).

1.2.2 Leader-follower terminological issues

In addition to the varied methodological and analytical approaches to leadership, mainstream leadership discussions have also recently debated the terminology of 'leader' and 'follower'. Researchers such as Alvesson and Spicer (2014) and Tourish (2014) claim that the leader-follower relations tend to prioritise some individuals and place others in disadvantaged positions. With these specialised terms, leadership is imagined in a way that 'clearly favour[s] some people, who are upgraded in terms of status, influence and rewards' (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014: 16). In addition to this, Learmonth and Morrell (2016: 265) claim that 'someone who dissents and resists is not a follower'. The authors add, even if the followers are assumed to have the ability to express dissent, the act of dissent is frequently viewed as negative and abnormal. Instead of 'follower', the authors propose other labels such as 'dissenter' or 'radical' (ibid.: 267).

While there is much to say about the suggested terms put forth by Learmonth and Morrell, the fact that the act of dissent by ordinary members is often seen as 'abnormal' is clearly problematic. By viewing their challenge to leadership as such, we thus limit the power dynamics in leadership, and label the ordinary members as a group that is 'contingent and constrained' (Collinson, 2017: 279). If we were to agree with Learmonth and Morrell's views that resistance is unusual, we would

assume that these members are underprivileged, and subsequently we would reach the conclusion that leadership is a unidirectional process and an uncontested form of top-down influence. Addressing debates around this issue are important in understanding leadership dynamics, and for that reason, we must abstain from viewing other members as limited in their agency, instead recognising the possibility for 'cynicism, disguised dissent and overt resistance' (Collinson, 2017: 279).

Admittedly, mainstream leadership studies need to diversify their perspectives if we want to gain truly new insights into this complex relationship. One of the reasons for this difficulty is that the roles of ordinary members are less frequently presented or acknowledged, especially in classical leadership research. Hence, what are needed to address this argument are new approaches to leadership and these could be achieved by examining some of the discursive processes through which practices of leadership are actually performed. More specifically, leadership should closely examine the concrete processes of how leadership is realised at the micro-level of interaction to reflexively recognise the roles and contributions of the ordinary members who theoretically could take on leadership roles. My study, however, does not specifically focus on how followers show dissent and resistance, but aims to provide empirical evidence of how leadership is distributed and shared among all members regardless of their positions. This in turn will highlight the strategies used by all members in their enactment of leadership and emphasise the fluidity of leadership practices that are bound to be negotiated. By using discourse analytical tools, we are able to go beyond traditional top-down approaches to leadership, examining discursive processes of leadership through empirical evidence, thus revealing more complex insights into how leadership is actually distributed and shared, and even challenged by other members who play roles as important as the formal leaders. The methodological approach that provides empirical evidence for the processes of leadership performance by different members thus will illustrate some of the important benefits that discourse analytical tools can offer to business and organisational sciences in consideration of the debates surrounding the leader-follower dyad.

1.2.3 Alternative constellations of leadership

Looking at the current trends of constellations of leadership, researchers, especially those studying leadership from a micro-discursive perspective, have begun to acknowledge leadership as co-constructed whereby the roles can be distributed, shifted and shared (Vine et al., 2008; Baxter, 2014; Choi and Schnurr, 2014; Clifton, 2017). Thus, rather than demonstrating cases of leaders doing the leading, the findings from these studies have questioned this notion and shifted the focus onto the leadership activities enacted by different members of working groups. Although the approach has gained momentum in leadership research, this topic has not been covered to any great extent in discourse analytical research. In the limited current research, emphasis is placed on leadership and hierarchical positions. Notable exceptions to this general trend are the studies from Vine et al. (2008) and Schnurr and Chan (2011) who investigate shared leadership, Choi and Schnurr (2014), who examine how leadership is enacted in a leaderless team, and Clifton (2017) and Wilson (2017) who investigate distributed leadership (henceforth DL). Within this gap in the leadership scholarship, this study aims to focus on the actual processes through which DL is created in everyday talk, and to demonstrate how the different practices of DL are enacted within a team that is hierarchically structured.

By looking at ‘other sides’ of leadership (Schnurr and Chan, 2011: 205), this study will reveal new insights into how leadership is distributed, shared, negotiated and even challenged by ordinary members – often referred to as ‘followers’ (Learmonth and Morrell, 2016; Collinson, 2017) – whose roles are as important as the formal leaders in the processes of leadership. It is hoped that alternative constellations of leadership will also challenge the leader-follower dichotomy by engaging in and providing empirical evidence of the distribution of leadership across all members and highlighting that those in subordinate positions are able to, and do, take on leadership roles at different points within interaction. In the analysis chapter (Chapter 6), a more comprehensive picture of DL practices within the team under investigation will be shown.

1.2.4 E-leadership

Another fascinating, yet surprisingly neglected area of leadership research, is the enactment of leadership in the digital realm, especially in text-mediated communication such as social media sites and applications (henceforth app) such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp (henceforth WA). The introduction of these communication services has made it possible to send an unlimited number of messages and communicate with geographically distributed members instantly and for free (Zimmerman, Wit and Gill, 2008; Skovholt, Grønning and Kankaanranta, 2014; Darics, 2016, 2017). With the prevalent use of these communication media in many workplaces today, it is not surprising that work tasks are realised through written communication, and members officially engage in and achieve complex communication goals from behind their keyboards and computer screens.

Digital leadership warrants special attention in our methodological approach in order to capture the complexities of leadership across diverse contexts, and subsequently to critically reflect upon the conceptualisation of leadership more broadly. As one of the proponents of workplace online communication, Darics (2013, 2014, 2016, 2017) exposes the role that non-verbal computer-mediated cues play during the achievement of workplace objectives, including leadership. Darics (2017) introduces the terms 'e-leaders' and 'e-leadership' when referring to the leaders who lead via digital channels and the ensuing leadership activities. Providing empirical evidence from instant messaging (henceforth IM), she demonstrates how transactional and relational workplace tasks are achieved by looking at non-verbal language such as orthographic and typographic means in online communication.

Considering the vast functions of online interactions in workplace communication, it is imperative to expose a range of leadership behaviours and 'shed light on how exactly people *do* leadership in digital, text-based environments' (Darics, 2017: 3). The exploration of leadership in online interactions is especially relevant for business meetings; leadership in that context does not only take place face-to-face but also in a wide variety of online situations, which are as demanding as verbal interactions. According to Cameron (2001: 2), 'technological change does not only produce new

methods for analysing discourse but also produces new kinds of discourse'. Discourse in WA is one of these new kinds of discourse.

Guided by the call issued by Darics (2017) for leadership researchers to venture into the world of online communication, this exploratory study aims to analyse workplace communication over WA and to observe how a team interacts, negotiates, and performs leadership tasks online. This study's choice of setting contributes greatly to leadership studies, as, to date, little research has been conducted on one of the world's leading communication platforms, WA.

1.2.5 Decision-making

Quoted as one of the activities that is reflective or constitutive of leadership, DM still remains under-researched. There are only a few studies that have considered DM from a linguistic perspective in workplace settings (Marra, 2003; Wodak, Kwon and Clarke, 2011; Holmes, Marra and Vine, 2011; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2012, 2017; Baxter, 2014; Darics, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). Compared to this work, far fewer studies have focused on leadership and DM, as well as the relationship between DM processes and the types of leadership activities being undertaken (Holmes et al., 2011; Clifton, 2012, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017).

My study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on leadership discourse by investigating leadership activities within a newly explored interactional context: DM in face-to-face meetings and through the online platform of WA in a small team in a workplace setting. The focus in this study will be on how decisions are negotiated, made and ratified in the team's regular meetings, and how these decisions are often revisited, further negotiated, and sometimes even changed in the team's subsequent discussions on the online platform WA. With the ephemeral quality of decisions and various processes of DM, we are able to observe discourse strategies of leadership as well as the members who are involved in each process. As contended by Huisman (2001: 76), episodes of DM 'should be placed in the context of a continuous stream of decision-making that develops in organizations in a variety of settings'.

Examining DM in two different contexts, this study will also make a significant contribution to DM scholarship by shedding further light on the ‘messiness of decision making’ (Angouri and Angelidou, 2012) and illuminate the intertextuality of DM processes across these contexts.

1.3 Researching workplace discourse in Malaysia

This research examines leadership in my home country, Malaysia. In this section, I introduce the motivation that drives this research before explicating several reasons that make the setting appropriate for the purposes of this study.

My interest in researching workplace discourse derives from my inquisitive nature and my interest in studying authentic spoken discourse. Having completed my Master’s degree in the field of sociolinguistics, my interest in workplace communication has motivated me to pursue other aspects of discourse in the workplace, i.e. leadership. Collecting data and analysing real-life conversations has been an intriguing experience. Through the methods utilised, I was able to engage with the research participants, and the data produced has offered opportunities for me to follow my interests and carry out multifaceted analyses. The present study acts as an extension of the research I carried out during my Master’s which I believe will help me in enhancing my skills as a researcher in the field of spoken discourse.

Although leadership discourse has gained popularity among scholars abroad, the field has drawn heavily on Western concepts of leadership in both theoretical work and practical applications; only a few studies have focused on discourse in non-Western workplace settings (Saito, 2010, 2011; Ladegaard, 2012; Schnurr and Mak, 2011; Schnurr and Zayts, 2011, 2017; Baxter and Al-A’ali, 2014). This situation posits a discernible bias in leadership studies towards English speaking professional workplace settings, whereby perspectives on leadership from Western contexts are overly emphasised (Jackson and Parry, 2011). Goebel (2014) notes that leadership research is not only scarce in non-English speaking settings but also in multilingual contexts such as Indonesia where both national and local ethnic languages are spoken. Similarly, Ebrahim (2013), who researches leadership language in Arabic

Middle Eastern countries, claims that this area is largely under-researched, particularly regarding women in leadership roles in non-Western settings. In the Malaysian context, leadership discourse is an unexplored area, and many past studies only describe leadership encounters in Malaysia, without a critical analytical focus on discourse (Kennedy, 2002; Oci, Ilac and Amante, 2012; Ayub, Manaf and Hamzah, 2014). Thus, authentic interactional data are not readily available.

Conversely, even though studies on workplace communication utilise naturally-occurring speech, most researchers have given prominence to various other linguistic aspects of discourse, such as code-switching (Morais, 1998; Mohd Jan, 2003), humour (Mohd Omar and Mohd Jan, 2013), directives (Adi Kasuma, 2012; Teoh, 2014), problem solving (Teoh, 2014) and reporting (Teoh, 2014), without linking them to the enactment of leadership. Apart from the local studies mentioned above, I was unable to locate any current research that is closely related to the topic of leadership discourse in the Malaysian setting. Moreover, many leadership studies outside the scope of leadership discourse adopt positivist principles whereby quantitative measures of leadership are more valued.

This creates a gap in the field of leadership discourse and shows that this particular aspect of discourse has been neglected. This situation is rather surprising because numerous studies in Western contexts reveal interesting findings on the linguistic repertoire of leadership (see the Language in the Workplace Project by a research team at Victoria University of Wellington, henceforth LWP). Addressing this gap will be valuable and will help to inform ongoing discussions around leadership discourse. One of the purposes of this study is to contribute a more localised conceptualisation of leadership and how these findings could contribute to the current debate on leadership.

While discussing leadership as a locally-defined practice, I am seeking to address wider concerns. There is the notion that 'local and everyday practices have become increasingly an important aspect across the areas in social sciences in exploring the distinct practices within particular contexts and time settings' (Pennycook, 2010: 1). Pennycook adds, '[t]o take the notion of locality seriously without juxtaposing it with

the global, the universal or the abstract is to engage with ideas of place and space that in turn require us to examine time, movement and interaction' (ibid.). Tourish (2015: 138), on the other hand, state that studies that are conducted to compare a context to another fall into the category of 'true but trivial'. In reference to Pennycook's and Tourish's claims and the aims of the study, to investigate leadership in a specific setting and identify the different discourse strategies that the participants use may result in nothing more than just addressing another sociolinguistic inquiry in this setting. It is important to note that I am not specifically aiming to present a central argument on how leadership practices are distinctively different in Malaysia than any other widely researched context, but rather I am more interested in linking the findings with broader notions of leadership as expressed by different studies in various workplaces. The findings will contribute to the literature on leadership and respond to and/or challenge the current debates on DM, leadership, and DM and leadership. These include the leadership activities in DM that are not exclusively associated with formal leaders (Marra, 2003; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012) and the occurrence of leadership in meetings and WA messages. Subsequently, I will explicate the influence of each context on how leadership strategies are manipulated in the enactment of leadership, and I will critically explore the implications of these as a way of understanding the social processes underlying leadership.

1.4 Research aims

This study aims to look at DL through authentic discourse among the members of a working group at a higher education institution (henceforth HE) in Malaysia. The discourse strategies utilised in leadership will be analysed, with the main focus on DM processes in different interactional contexts, specifically committee meetings and the WA platform. Keeping in mind that leadership is complex (Schnurr, 2009a; Baxter, 2010) and context-dependent, this study adopts a case-study approach with a view to contributing to the existing body of leadership discourse literature. It may also enhance local leadership discourse studies by providing examples of localised interactional styles at work.

Investigating DL in a small team of academics, I focus on DM processes that occur in meetings and their group chat on the WA platform, in order to explicate the complexities of DM processes and leadership practices in these contexts. Despite the team being hierarchically constructed with a formal leader clearly taking charge of the team, my findings will show how leadership roles are distributed, negotiated and challenged across the members on a turn-by-turn basis. By focusing on two different contexts, this research aims to demonstrate various DL practices that are influenced by the contexts in which they occurred, various processes of DM and the intertextuality of meanings in DM processes. The findings will show that even after a decision has been reached and ratified, decisions remain open for further scrutiny and change – sometimes even across interactional contexts. A decision made and agreed upon in a face-to-face meeting could easily be challenged, revisited, and revised accordingly in WA messages sent by team members. Based on the findings, we are able to observe a continuous stream of DM across contexts and capture the fluid, ephemeral nature of decisions and the complexities of DM processes that current DM models and frameworks fail to capture.

Bearing in mind the objectives of the study, the present research is guided by the following research questions (henceforth RQs):

1. How is leadership discursively ‘done’ in this team in regular meetings and on WA?
 - a. How do team members make decisions?
 - b. Who are involved in these activities?
2. Are there any differences in the way DM is done in regular meetings and in the WA group?
 - a. If so, how can we account for these differences in the way DM and leadership are done in these two contexts?
3. What do the insights about DM and leadership in this workplace mean in terms of leadership conceptualisation in a broader context?

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. This first chapter describes the current state of leadership studies, the gaps in leadership research, an overview of workplace interaction studies in Malaysia, and the aims of the research. The study's research questions are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2 establishes the background of leadership research with a literature review that covers three sections. The first section addresses the topic of leadership, covering issues such as definitions, the trends in leadership research, alternative constellations of traditional leadership and recent debates emerging from a discourse methodological approach to leadership. The second section reviews the topic of decisions and DM, and the relationship between DM and leadership. Empirical research on leadership discourse will also be succinctly described. In the final section, I will review the features of WA and the empirical evidence of *doing* leadership in the virtual realm.

Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical frameworks, the methodological tools employed for the purpose of the study, issues encountered during the data collection, and an introduction to the larger institutional context and the working team. The data collection methods include recordings of the interactions in four meetings, a collection of WA messages, interviews and non-participant observations. An overview of how the data will be analysed will be illuminated later on, in the penultimate section of the chapter.

In Chapter 4, I will explicate the DM processes that occurred in face-to-face meetings and the WA platform. A DM continuum alongside several excerpts of meetings and WA interactions is presented to illustrate the various categories of decisions that occur within the dataset. Depending on the complexities of each process, leadership is enacted with respect to its characteristics and features, hence building the empirical groundwork for subsequent chapters on leadership and DM, in line with the overall aim of this thesis.

In Chapter 5, the analysis of the data is further narrowed down to consider instances of DM that correspond to formal positions within the team, aligning with the claim that DM is a prime site from which to observe leadership. This chapter will focus on the discourse strategies used by authority figures within the team – the leader of the team and the Head of Department (henceforth HOD) – as they enact leadership in DM processes. The chapter concludes with some insights into collaborative DM episodes that involve the members in subordinate positions.

Chapter 6 further explores how leadership is distributed and collaboratively undertaken in the team by members of different positions, both collectively and independently of formal leaders. Throughout the chapter, I will raise several issues regarding the legitimisation of leadership and the contributions of ordinary members and the formal leaders, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7 attempts to answer the RQs that I have posed in this first chapter of the thesis. This discussion will include the similarities and/or discrepancies between the two investigated platforms and the factors contributing to these discrepancies. Additionally, I will discuss DM typologies and leadership, conceptual issues of leadership and the broader implications of my findings relating to the critical perspectives of the conceptualisation of leadership. Following this, a critical exploration of the recent debates on leadership will be presented. The chapter will sum up with the insights gained from the DL practices within the team.

Finally, in Chapter 8, these different themes are pulled together to look at the implications of the study in terms of its theoretical and methodological contributions to existing research. The suggestions for future research will open up different ways of researching leadership. I conclude my thesis with my personal reflections and hope that my research can serve as a positive contribution to other leadership researchers and disciplines.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the literature that shapes the direction of this research. I divide the chapter into three main parts. The first part of the review addresses the topic of leadership, in which I discuss several definitions of leadership, review the issues on leadership and management, and reflect the concept of leadership and *doing* leadership by discussing different perspectives and approaches to leadership. Further, I review leadership research within the tradition of 'leadership psychology' and elaborate on the more recent and trending approach of 'discursive leadership'. I discuss several alternative constellations of leadership, review empirical research on leadership in applied linguistics, and discuss some criticisms that were posed in response to post-heroic leadership. In the second part, Section 2.7, I review the topic of DM and conceptual issues surrounding decisions and DM, and present the empirical research within the respective areas. The fundamental features and the concept of WA are briefly outlined in Section 2.8. Adding to this, I review empirical research on digital communication in the workplace and suggest how this research could contribute to the leadership field. I end the chapter with a conclusion of all the topics reviewed in the chapter and present the gaps that are potentially filled by this research.

2.2 Defining leadership

The central issue when talking about leadership is its definition. Like any concept in social science, the definition of leadership is 'arbitrary and subjective' (Yukl, 2013: 23). 'There is no single 'correct' definition that captures the essence of leadership' (ibid.) hence no agreed definition of leadership among researchers even though the topic has been widely researched in a variety of disciplines (Yukl, 2002; Avery, 2004; Fairhurst, 2007). Avery (2004: 7) observes that 'defining leadership is not an easy task' and Clifton (2008: 2) claims that 'a definitive and all-encompassing definition of

leadership is perhaps an unattainable objective'. Consequently, the concept of leadership remains elusive and enigmatic due to the different approaches towards leadership taken by different researchers (ibid.). As mentioned by Yukl (2013: 18), most scholars of leadership define leadership 'according to their individual perceptions and preferences towards the aspects of the phenomenon that most interest them'. Leadership was initially viewed as being made up of individual characteristics, behaviours, ranks, positions and environments where leadership was being enacted, and as the reactions of followers towards their leaders (Afridi, 2013; Yukl, 2013). For instance, a definition by Stodgill (1948) suggests that a leader's effective characteristics such as their capacity, achievement, responsibility, participation and status are important in achieving organisational goals as well as the influence a leader has over followers.

Another way to view leadership is with respect to the processes through which leadership takes place (Fairhurst, 2007; Pomeratz and Denvir, 2007; Larsson and Lundholm, 2010; Yukl, 2013). Fairhurst (2007) defines leadership as a process of influence and management of meaning that is distributed across all members. Similarly, Yukl (2013: 23), describes leadership as 'a process of influencing others to understand and agree with what needs to be done, how it can be done effectively, the process of facilitating individuals and the collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives'. These definitions emphasise the dynamic process of leadership where the leaders and subordinates provide directions to each other that can be achieved through constant communication. Similarly, in the social constructionism approach that considers multiplicity and culturally bound ways to leadership, leadership is perceived as having an influence (Clifton, 2012, 2017). According to Clifton (2012: 149), '...rights to assess and the right to define the organizational landscape are negotiated in talk, and the person, or persons, who have the most influence in this process emerge as the leaders'. From this perspective, leadership is observed as a constant flow as talk progresses, can be distributed, and is open to challenge. Those who are likely to enact leadership roles are those who have access to more impactful discursive resources that could influence the process of the negotiation of meaning.

Another definition of leadership comes from a discourse analytical perspective by Holmes et al. (2011: 7). The authors conceptualise leadership as a transformational process, or activities that draw on a range of discursive strategies in order to integrate different aspects of effective communication in everyday workplace interactions. Leaders' discourse does not only focus on vision-based workplace tasks, but also emphasises the interpersonal skills of communication. Transactional behaviour, also known as 'task-oriented behaviour' (Yukl, 2013: 64), refers to workplace-oriented goals, such as making decisions, while relational aspects, also recognised as 'change-oriented behaviour' (Yukl, 2013: 65), engage the leaders and subordinates with interpersonal aspects of communication, such as small talk and humour. These definitions emphasise both task-based and relational-oriented activities, that are more representative of workplace reality. They shift the view from 'who' is doing leadership to 'how' leadership is actually performed through various workplace activities.

In conceptualising leadership for the present study, the definition put forth by Clifton (2012) will be referred to as identifying leadership performance associated with DM in two different interactional contexts. The definition is 'leadership as the process of influencing the management of meaning' (Clifton, 2012: 149) and this definition is mostly utilised by leadership research, especially in studies that take a social constructionist approach to leadership. The focus is on the process rather than the persons. According to Avery (2004: 7), the definition of leadership should not only be applicable in theory, but also 'sound in practice' and 'should be capable of adapting new ideas and circumstances' that occur in my dataset. The circumstances in this research include leadership practices in the WA platform that are prone to being negotiated and challenged relatively different than face-to-face settings and performed by different members holding various positions.

2.3 Leadership vs management

Over the past decade there have been several research studies critically discussing the differences between leadership and management (Zaleznik, 1998; Kotter, 2001; Zimmerman, 2001; Kotterman, 2006; Toor and Ofari, 2008). This body of research

has not only discussed the conceptual complexities and etymological development of leadership and management, but it has also outlined several behaviours that mark the lines between leadership and management. As I will elaborate in more detail below, some previous studies observe leadership and management, and leaders and managers, as mutually exclusive. All too often these studies disregard and do not rigorously address existing literature aside from the mainstream organisational perspectives. In the following section, I will briefly review some of the early studies that differentiate leadership from management, before critically engaging with the arguments on this debate from a social constructionist perspective.

One of the distinctions between leadership and management highlighted by previous researchers centres around historical perspectives. As indicated previously, leadership has been traditionally defined based on one's characteristics, positions, performance and the setting in which the leadership is exercised (Grint, 2010). These aspects are associated with officially appointed leaders who comply with expected behaviours such as strategising the organisation's vision, providing direction, bringing innovation and coping with change (Zaleznik, 1998; Kotter, 2001), as well as offering a source of motivation to the followers. In these regards, it can be observed that appointed leaders exert and are expected to influence authority over subordinates (Toor and Ofari, 2008). Management, on the other hand, is often associated with planning, regulating work and controlling issues, handling available sources and establishing steps to achieve pre-determined goals (Toor and Ofari, 2008). Management also involves systematic and rational assessment of situations, coordinating and delegating work, bringing consistency to the workplace processes in attaining its objectives (Kotterman, 2006) and 'maintaining bottom-line results for the betterment of the organisation' (Zimmerman, 2002: 13). Unlike leadership, which is associated with creating vision and making change, management emphasises the practical and mundane everyday aspects of work. As also mentioned by Kotter (2001: 86), 'leadership is about coping with change, meanwhile management is about coping with complexity'. In Kotter's words, the term 'change' means that leaders 'gather a broad range of data and look for patterns, relationships and linkages that help explain things', using inductive strategies. In contrast, 'complexity' in

management processes refers to bringing order and consistency to the multitude of workplace processes (ibid.; Weathersby, 1999) but these behaviours are deductive in nature as the managers 'produce orderly results, and not change' (Kotter, 2001: 87).

As a consequence of these different conceptualisations of leadership and management, characteristics of appointed leaders and managers are often viewed differently. Leaders, for instance, are observed as charismatic and are frequently admired (Kotterman, 2006), and they are often perceived as responsible for the organisation's successes and failures, hence making leadership more challenging than management. Leaders are considered as heroic figures who determine the direction of their organisations. As Yukl (1989: 276) sceptically claims, 'there is a mystical, romantic quality associated with leadership, similar to that for other stereotyped heroes in our culture, such as ... the secret agent who acts alone to save the world from nuclear destruction'. By contrast, motivation and inspiration are not normally associated with managers. Instead, doing management is often perceived as 'not exciting or glamorous' (ibid.: 93) as it involves controlling, coordinating and helping people in their routine, day-to-day jobs. Managers are responsible for keeping work in parallel with established goals, and as Kotter claims, 'they [managers] cannot be dependent on the unusual or hard to obtain [tasks]' (ibid.). Like Kotter, Zaleznik (1998) argues that leaders produce dramatic changes and failures but managers produce 'standards, consistency, predictability and order' (ibid.: 14). In his article on the mechanics of leadership versus management, Zimmerman (2001) describes managers as captains who apply their knowledge and experience to advance the organisations' agenda, analysts who review collected data to make educated decisions, and controllers of all details in typical business activities. These distinctions essentially result in viewing leadership work as grandiose, meanwhile management denotes low-level jobs and achieves departmental goals. With these distinctions in the responsibilities of leaders and managers, some researchers even assume that it is impossible to be both a leader and manager simultaneously (Kotter, 2001).

However, in the view of some other researchers, the notions of leadership and management are highly interrelated. Yukl (1989), for instance, utilises the terms 'managerial leadership' and 'leader-manager', to indicate that these concepts are complementary systems of actions. The behaviours mentioned previously that are allocated for appointed leaders and managers are the typical behaviours in the workplace, and they are often enacted by both leaders and managers. Research has produced a 'bewildering variety of behaviour concepts pertaining to managers and leaders', which poses difficulties for researchers in distinguishing from one behaviour to another (Yukl, 2013: 63). In his stance on the interchangeability of leadership and management, Yukl (2005) argues that differentiating and stereotyping the roles of appointed leaders and managers only shifts the attention away from empirical research on what constitutes effective and efficient leadership processes. Subscribing to similar views, Capowski (1994: 13) claims that labelling differences between these two concepts is 'probably not beneficial at all, reap[s] chaos, sow[s] complacency and even catastrophe'. Overemphasising the differences between leadership and management only contributes to the perceptions of grandiose aspects of leadership and bureaucratic roles in managing. Capowski continues that organisations need a combination of both qualities of leadership and management, with 'better management and better leadership' (ibid.).

In spite of these arguments, there seem to several reasons why making distinctions between the nature of jobs in leadership and management is important within business and organisational studies. One of the reasons is due to the belief that these two work forces require distinct skills (Zaleznik, 1998; Zimmerman, 2001; Kotterman, 2006; Toor and Ofari, 2008). Ideally, a business organisation has several leaders and managers who work in different day-to-day workplace operations and processes. In business organisations that comprised several levels of divisions, 'leaders' and 'managers' are not the same people and, more often than not, they undertake different functions in the organisations. Hence, distinguishing between the specific nature of jobs appears to be useful for the organisations to strike a good balance between the tasks of leaders and managers. In organisational studies specifically, differentiating these behaviours facilitates the design of taxonomies and theories on

leadership and management, within which the subtle differences between the two can be categorised. For instance, 'taxonomies designed to facilitate research and theory on managerial effectiveness differ from taxonomies designed to describe observations of managerial activities, or taxonomies designed to catalogue position responsibilities of managers and administrators' (Yukl, 2013: 63). Leadership and management in this case are viewed from the perspective of the tasks that the appointed leaders and managers engage in, hence reflecting the ways that leadership and management are defined through the lens of business organisational studies. Some researchers may feel that these different constructs would only widen the definitions of leadership, while others would argue that all behaviours associated with leadership and management reflect leadership behaviours. Can all the behaviours refer to only one concept? This brings us to a social constructionist perspective on leadership and management, which proposes that leadership and management are constructed in mundane and everyday workplace activities, and much of these activities are understood as leadership.

In the following, I will introduce the concept of social constructionism (see also Chapter 3, Section 3.2) underpinning the philosophy of leadership in this study, before detailing the perspectives of social constructionism applied to the debate on differentiating between leadership and management.

2.3.1 Social constructionism, leadership and management

Social constructionism is an approach that acknowledges multiple realities and occurrences of what counts as leadership. As opposed to a positivist stance that views the world as an objective reality, social constructionism regards knowledge of the world as socially constructed through interaction, and in the context of leadership, these interactions shape and are shaped by the ways in which leadership is enacted within a setting. Social constructionism argues that various factors such as positions, knowledge or experience that one has, or the atmosphere of a workplace, influence the ways that leadership is enacted. By that argument, leadership is constructed differently in one setting compared to another. For example, the ways that leadership is enacted from a Pakeha community of practice (henceforth CofP)

will be different to leadership in a Maori CofP, despite the fact that both communities are geographically located in New Zealand (Holmes, Marra and Vine, 2009; Holmes, 2015). In short, leadership is observed through social interaction that occurs in the workplace, and the notion of leadership can be observed through mundane, typical tasks and activities accomplished on a day-to-day basis.

Embracing the concepts of leadership and management from a social constructionist perspective, researchers in this field view these notions as overlapping, interchangeable and complementary systems of actions (Fairhurst, 2007). Within this paradigm, we subscribe to the tradition of discursive leadership where communication is at the heart of leadership. Leadership is actively constructed by the participants in interactions (Fairhurst, 2007) and the acts of leading and managing are observed through mundane aspects of talk, from creating visions, concepts and plans, to developing rapport and motivating fellow colleagues, supporting or challenging decisions, facilitating colleagues in routine tasks, having small talk, giving and asking for information and many more behaviours. Both grandiose and management behaviours in the workplace are considered to be exhibiting leadership behaviours. Hence, there is no need to distinguish between 'leadership' and 'management', because all so-called grandiose and mundane behaviours are acknowledged as ways of *doing* leadership by all members of organisations.

The ways various leadership and management activities are enacted through social interactions are of crucial importance, shifting our focus away from the idea that leadership is more grandiose or heroic than management. Aligned with this claim, researchers from business and managerial perspectives (e.g. Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003) have also moved away from differentiating leadership and management; instead, they recognise the extraordinary nature of the mundane aspects of what leaders and managers actually do. Emphasising listening as a vital activity for leadership, these authors claim that leadership is significantly related to the leaders and managers' abilities in developing relational skills and creating a positive environment at work. The authors aptly conclude that mundane behaviours eliminate 'the expectation that leaders do special tasks', but 'significant things

matters [as they turn] everyday activities into something remarkable'. Observing the mundane becomes more important in studying leadership than viewing what the leaders and managers actually do.

By acknowledging mundane activities of leadership, the notion of leadership comes to emphasise the critical perspective that leadership may involve several people. We remove the barriers of leadership and management behaviours, and explore leadership as a dynamic process, in which fellow members construct and co-construct several leadership responsibilities (see Chan and Schnurr, 2011; Holmes et al., 2011; Clifton, 2018). As will be shown in Chapters 4 and 5, several linguistic strategies in DM processes are identified as ways through which leadership is enacted, and they include initiating proposals, challenging proposals, displaying expertise, epistemic primacy and deontic authority. These activities, although appearing to be mundane, represent leadership behaviours that are socially situated and actively managed by participants in their attempts to influence DM processes.

Reflecting on the articles quoted here, we have seen that the debates surrounding the differentiation of leadership and management have been discussed for more than a decade. In my search for recent arguments on this topic, it appears that the debate has been discontinued as there are limited recent publications. This is particularly true in critical leadership studies where researchers have begun to reconceptualise the notion of leadership, engaging in debates such as alternative constellations of leadership and followership, and also by providing empirical evidence to capture how leadership is – often collaboratively – enacted in situ (Handford, 2010; Clifton, 2012; Baxter, 2014; Schnurr and Olga, 2017; Schnurr and Andreas, 2018). Hence, with these recent debated issues and an increasing interest in observing leadership through mundane activities at work, I believe that taking a stance from a social constructionism perspective offers a way of moving forward in the debate on leadership-management and leaders-managers. Leadership and management are perceived as interchangeable, complementary and socially constructed, shared and contested through typical activities at work, by all members in an organisation.

Yet, this does not mean that these issues are insignificant or can be resolved easily, but rather we are taking more productive steps to understand leadership, benefitting from different research paradigms and methodologies in leadership research that draw from the fields of applied linguistics and pragmatics (see section 2.5 on empirical research on leadership discourse). It is critical to understand that such engagement will help extend empirical evidence on leadership in various settings, with wider implications for data-driven studies of leadership, particularly within mainstream and critical leadership studies.

In the next section, I review two main traditions of leadership, namely leadership psychology and discursive leadership, and further explore in-depth vertical and post-heroic leadership.

2.4 Leadership traditions

In the search for understanding leadership, scholars in organisational behaviour and leadership studies have incorporated two different traditions of leadership that have ‘supplied important foundational work in leadership studies’ (Fairhurst, 2007: viii) and influenced the current thinking in this field: leadership psychology and discursive leadership. These traditions have led to several approaches to leadership and they are addressed in the next sections.

2.4.1 Leadership psychology

Leadership psychology is the traditional research approach that leadership scholars have been historically relying on (House and Aditya, 1997; Hermann, 1999). Effective leadership is indicated through the traits (House and Aditya, 1997) and essence of the leaders. Essence in this sense refers to the qualities of the leaders, disregarding the socio and cultural contexts that may influence the enactment of leadership (Fairhurst, 2007). The early theories of leadership psychology include trait, behaviour and contingency theories that assume that concepts derived from surveys and interviews could reflect the reality of leadership (Hermann, 1999). On the other hand, Fairhurst (2007) argues that these methods only constitute codified leadership processes, and she views leadership by objective criteria. Thus, according to her,

leadership psychology does not represent the fine-grained analysis of the social process of leadership as it is 'less focused on the contested nature of leadership interaction' (Fairhurst, 2007: 3). The analyses of leadership psychology have created biases, as it 'concerns leader-centric analysis even if the ontological unit is a leader-member dyad, group, or whole organisation' (Fairhurst, 2007: 9). They disregard social or cultural views due to individual-oriented analytical units.

One of the earliest approaches to studying leadership was the trait approach, which involved a search for 'traits and skills that predict whether a person will attain positions of leadership and be effective in these positions' (Yukl, 2013: 144). The traits that are valued in good leaders include self-confidence, extroversion, honesty, a sense of justice, intelligence, good verbal reasoning, and persuasion (Yukl, 2013: 143). Since the inception of leadership psychology, related research has included longitudinal studies that were conducted to discover the relationship between personalities and leadership (Lord, De Vader and Alliger, 1986; Hogan, Curphy and Hogan, 1994; Judge et al., 2002), and studies that examine desirable leadership traits (Nichols and Cottrell, 2014). Trait approaches emphasise one's personality, particularly the leaders and how these traits can be developed and enhanced in order to be a successful leader (Goff, 2003). With self-ratings, ratings by subordinates and tests of traits and skills as the general measures of leadership, very little information about the psychometric properties of traits has been reported (House and Aditya, 1997; Yukl, 2013). Consequently, the results from studies on personality and leadership have been fairly misleading. Some studies 'over generalise' (Lord et al., 1986: 402), 'have limited validity' (House and Aditya, 1997: 411), or are 'inconsistent and are often disappointing' (Judge et al., 2002: 766; Yukl, 2013: 163). In response to these criticisms, researchers began to turn their views towards the behaviours of leaders to identify effective measures of leadership (Yukl, 2013). This approach is known as the behaviour approach.

The behaviour approach 'evaluates the behaviour of successful leaders by observing how well 'a manager resolves conflicts, copes with demands, recognises opportunities and overcomes constraints' (Yukl, 2013: 28). Through this, a taxonomy of actions and patterns of leadership styles are produced. By far the most common

methods of research utilised in this approach are the analysis of biographical and case history data, survey research (Yukl, 2013), descriptions of the superiors' behaviour, critical incidents (Gavino and Portugal, 2013) and interviews with leaders and subordinates. As with the trait approaches, the behaviour approach became inadequate, since 'each study produced a somewhat different set of behaviour categories, making it difficult to compare and integrate the results across studies' (Yukl, 2013: 63). Due to these inconsistencies in categorising the leaders' behaviours, this approach lacked 'a systematic conceptual framework' (Conger and Kanungo, 1987: 637), and this made it difficult to interpret one behaviour from another. This approach also disregarded the importance of the contexts in which leadership behaviours were enacted. Many researchers of the field were hoping that the identified behaviours would predict leadership in different situations, but it is unrealistic to expect that a given set of behaviours would work in all circumstances (Carpenter et al., 2010). Successful leaders in one setting may not be considered successful in another. To illustrate this, a study by Carpenter et al. (2010) shows that a high school principal's effective way of leading would be different from the leadership practices of military leaders. Ignoring the vital role of context, the behaviour approach fell out of favour with researchers who were looking for a better approach to study leadership (Carpenter et al., 2010; Yukl, 2013).

The focus of leadership studies then moved to prescribing different leaders' behaviours in different situations. This process is known as a 'contingency theory, describing how aspects of the leadership situation can alter a leader's influence and effectiveness' (Yukl, 2013: 169). Contingency theories emphasise the crucial role of the individual and context, where individuals demonstrate their alignment with and response to the context (Fairhurst, 2007). The approach takes into account the situation, a factor ignored in both trait and behaviour approaches. Despite being a better approach than previous ones, contingency theories, too, have their limitations. Yukl (2013: 181) notes the following weaknesses: 'limited utility for understanding effective leadership in different situations, and ambiguous description of relationships between leader behaviour and situations. This leads to the general conclusion that the evidence supporting contingency theories of

effective leadership is inconsistent and difficult to interpret'. Yukl further suggests that stronger research methods are needed to provide more conclusive results, and one way to do this is by paying more attention to the overall pattern of leadership behaviour rather than examining each type of behaviour separately.

Whilst this body of literature is important in its own respect, many researchers have shifted their focus from 'leaders' to 'leadership', where the enactment of leadership is identified within the context and processes of its enactment. Moving the focus to the processes of leadership, this approach is known as the relational and discursive approaches, and the ensuing section describes these.

2.4.2 Introduction to relational leadership and discursive leadership

It was not until the early twentieth century that the concept of leadership process was embraced as it is known today by many researchers, as a dynamic, social influence process involving emergent coordination and change (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Relational leadership views 'persons, leadership and other relational realities, such as new values, attitudes, behaviours and ideologies' as contributing factors to the dynamics within leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006: 655). According to the theory of relational leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006), this perspective does not focus on hierarchy but rather embraces leadership as shared roles, social influence and interactions that impact the collective act of leadership. Nonetheless, relational leadership has been criticised for its lack of methodologically-sound approach to correctly specifying behaviours in communication, in concordance with the theory that is argued to be multilevel (Fairhurst and Antonakis, 2012). Methods such as individual interviews or self-report data by the leaders are claimed to be isolated from relations with the followers, thus provide static representations of relational aspects of communication (ibid.).

In finding ways of apprehending leadership beyond coding depictions and causal connections between variables, Fairhurst (2007) has demonstrated how leadership is performed through and in discourse. 'Without the immediate concern of building generalizable theory', this view embraces 'a thick description of the context, including immediate as well as cultural and political aspects' (Fairhurst, 2008:517).

Leadership is an influence and meaningful management process that is created and constantly re-created by a social relationship, involving both leaders and other members. The work by Fairhurst on leadership discourse has been established as an important turning point in leadership analysis.

2.4.3 Discursive leadership

To reiterate, a discursive approach to leadership embraces ‘the processes of social construction and its products vis-à-vis the operation of one or more texts’ (Fairhurst, 2007: 5). Discursive leadership veers away from traditional assumptions about individuals and focuses on the social and cultural elements that influence the meaning that is shared by individuals in different contexts. Rather than seeing leadership as static, leadership roles can be shifted, distributed and even contested among several members. This approach examines the practical accomplishment of leadership in naturally occurring settings, and interactions such as discussions, face-to-face dialogues and interviews are the ultimate focus rather than ‘individual observation, perceptions and summary judgements’ (Fairhurst, 2007: 9).

In examining discursive leadership, Fairhurst (2007) mentions that discourse can take two forms; these are known as the ‘little d’ and ‘big D’ discourse. Drawing on the works of Potter and Wetherell (1987, as cited in Fairhurst, 2007), Fairhurst defines ‘little d’ discourse as the study of talk and text in social practices where it embodies cultural meanings. It also serves as a ‘medium for social interaction where the details of language in use and interaction process are a central concern for analysts’ (Fairhurst, 2007: 6). The ‘little d’ approach can be applied by utilising discourse approaches that focus on interaction processes, such as in interactional sociolinguistics (henceforth IS), ethnomethodology, conversation analysis (henceforth CA), speech act schematics, interaction analyses and semiotics. On the other hand, big ‘D’ discourse, which is a term derived from Foucault’s work (1972, 1980 as cited in Fairhurst, 2007: 7) refers to ‘general and enduring systems for the formation and articulation of ideas in a historically situated time’. This discourse is often analysed by ‘employing crucial and postmodern discourse analyses that focus heavily on systems of thought’ (ibid.: 7). Apart from being different in terms of

analytical focus, discursive leadership also differs from leadership psychology with regard to the notion of power and influence. While leadership psychology acknowledges power and influence as traits found in leaders, which are exerted in a top-down manner, discursive leadership, on the other hand, suggests that power is enacted by both superiors and subordinates. This shows that discursive leadership approaches are concerned with different forms of power play and views leadership as socially-constructed.

Despite her preference towards discursive leadership, Fairhurst notes that it would not be justified to give more prominence to one approach over leadership psychology. In fact, she stresses that 'the two are simply alternative co-constructing lenses with their own strengths and shortcomings' (Fairhurst, 2007: 9). Similarly, Clifton (2012: 149) states that the ability of discursive leadership to provide empirical knowledge about the actual practices of leadership would 'complement concepts of leadership derived from social psychology and to show the discursive resources by which the management of meaning is achieved'.

Although the discursive approach emphasises the framing and context of the leader's communication when analysing leadership (Fairhurst, 2007), discursive leadership is disputed for being unable to differentiate between the discursive processes and the relationship with the contexts in which it occurs. Furthermore, this approach tends to mistreat the roles of discursive strategies, viewing linguistic and pragmatic devices as interchangeable equivalents (Wodak et al., 2011). In responding to these shortcomings, Wodak et al. (2011) highlight the need to explore how leaders do leadership within specified contexts, and this urge aptly captures the recent trend towards investigating leadership through discourse in contexts.

Despite an overlap of focus and interest between discursive leadership and functionalist studies on leadership, the discursive turn has also gained popularity in mainstream and critical leadership studies. Researchers within other fields, such as business and organisational studies, have begun to recognise the contributions that the discourse analytical approach make to leadership (Tourish and Jackson, 2008; Crevani et al., 2010; Ladkin, 2010; Larsson and Lundholm, 2010; Alvesson and Spicer,

2014). In their guest editorial section in the *Journal of Business Communication*, Tourish and Jackson (2008) invite leadership researchers to engage in discursive processes to best illuminate the communication practices through which leadership is enacted and constructed; meanwhile Ladkin (2010) supports the idea of leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon and strongly agrees that leadership is context dependent.

Crevani et al. (2010) and Larsson and Lundholm (2010), additionally, show brief examples of everyday social interactions at work and adopt conversation analysis in identifying occurrences of leadership. Also, these researchers emphasise the mundane processes and procedures of work and involve many actors and variables as a means of understanding how leaderships works and who is involved in it. Looking at the processes behind leadership, their findings may contribute to 'new leadership ideals where heroic masculinities can be replaced by less individualistic and mere humane constructs, where the potential of leadership in every social situation is emphasized' (Crevani et al., 2010: 84). Highlighting the importance of exploring different facets of leadership, Crevani et al. (2010: 84) emphasise that, 'just proposing new post-heroic ideals without studying leadership practices and interactions might lead to the construction of new heroes or to co-optation of the new models'.

This claim aptly summarises the call for a more dynamic and critical perspective on leadership to reflect the intricate processes of leadership as it is constructed and enacted. For this reason, discourse analytical approaches to leadership have much to offer to mainstream leadership studies by looking beyond quantitative and statistical analysis and providing empirical evidence of leadership in detailed exploration of leadership performance in real-life settings. My study contributes to this strand by adopting a discourse analytical approach to leadership performance in DM processes.

Research that utilises approaches focusing on language in use can be found particularly in sociolinguistics and pragmatics studies where the focus of static analytical units is defined by social processes within a variety of contexts (Schnurr,

2009a; Holmes et al., 2011; Schnurr and Mak, 2011; Svennevig, 2011; Ladegaard, 2012; Baxter, 2014). These studies focus on social processes within a variety of contexts and define the focus points on discourse that lead the way for the analysis. With the ontological position of social constructionism, interactions are assumed to be collectively constructed. The discursive approach focuses on what members in a community can do, and leadership is viewed as a collective effort that concerns the whole team. Discourse analysts are interested to know 'what kind of leadership are we talking about', 'who is involved in the process' and 'how have the social relationship and contextual factors shaped it' (Fairhurst, 2007: 15). In addressing these questions, applied linguists, pragmatists and discourse analysts investigate leadership from the discourse perspective, which has enabled them to observe the the intricate processes of how leadership is collaboratively enacted in contemporary constellation of leadership, including co-, shared and DL. The use of discourse approaches such as IS, ethnomethodology, and conversation analysis places a focus on interaction processes (Vine et al., 2008; Holmes et al., 2011; Clifton, 2012; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017; Wilson, 2017). These researchers reject various theories of leadership but value local knowledge over the generalisable result by capturing how leadership occurs in real-life moments (Fairhurst, 2009). The realities of leadership are neither fixed nor governed by general norms, but they are socially constructed according to the context in which leadership occurs. Aligning with these researchers and taking a discourse and sociolinguistic perspective, I support the applied linguists and discourse analysts who argue that analysing discourse is the methodological way forward for identifying discursive strategies and the processes of leadership in real-life settings, with much to offer towards an adequate conceptualisation of leadership (Clifton, 2006, 2017; Schnurr, 2009a; Svennevig, 2011).

Having discussed a selection of leadership traditions, the following section considers the distinction between formal leadership and emergent leadership, i.e. the difference between *being* a leader on account of one's status and *doing* leadership. In the following, I describe in detail the different approaches to leadership, including vertical leadership and post-heroic leadership.

2.4.4 Vertical leadership

Before the 21st century, leadership was traditionally conceived of as centring around a hierarchical and formal leader. This view of leadership placed emphasis on appointed leaders or superiors and how their abilities, traits and actions built and contributed to effective leadership (Crevani, Lidngren and Packendorff, 2009). Also known as top-down leadership or vertical leadership, this approach prioritised individual leaders and their characteristics. As indicated by Grint (2005: 28), 'perhaps the most traditional way of configuring leadership is to suggest that it is really concerned with a spatial position in an organization of some kind - formal or informal'. Leadership positions might be viewed as those that are 'above us', 'at the top of the tree', 'superordinates' (Grint, *ibid.*), 'heads', 'leaders' and other equivalent terms. These appointed leaders would be expected to enact a leadership role over groups of subordinates and create change from the top.

Vertical leadership is based on the idea that one person is firmly 'in charge' while the rest are simply followers (Pearce, 2004: 47; Yukl, 1999; Ensley, Hmieleski and Pearce, 2006). Power and authority are invested in a designated leader who exerts influence, wisdom and guidance for team members (Pearce and Conger, 2003). Leaders who practise vertical leadership are responsible for directing, allocating tasks and monitoring members' activities as well as giving edicts that travel downwards to the subordinates. As such, vertical leadership identifies the contribution of formal leaders as meaningful and key to organisational innovation. In this respect, vertical leadership emphasises the concept of *being* a leader, in which leadership is primarily positional and only formally appointed leaders are responsible, expected to and recognised for leadership roles.

With such an assumption, the authority and influence of leadership only resides with those people who occupy formal positions. For instance, transformational leadership, which is founded on the concept of vertical leadership, claims that leaders 'uplift the morale, motivation, and morals of their followers' (Bass, 1999: 9). Transformational leadership 'elevates the follower's level of maturity and ideals as well as concerns for achievement, self-actualization, and the well-being of others,

the organization, and society' (ibid.: 11). In other words, those in the top positions are acknowledged for their abilities to inspire and help subordinates to be more innovative, confident and determined. Similarly, transactional leadership, which is also founded on vertical leadership, argues that leaders work to 'cater to their followers' immediate self-interests' (Bass, 1999: 11). In transactional leadership, formally-appointed leaders direct and monitor subordinates' performance, and take corrective action through direction and authority over their subordinates and reward them for improvements made. These two theoretical constructs of vertical leadership rely on the leaders' capabilities as all-round individuals, who can transform and bring change upon subordinates' 'commitment, involvement, loyalty and performance' (ibid.), meanwhile transactional leadership can lower stress among subordinates. Vertical, transformational and transactional leadership brings the notion of top-down leadership to the fore, seeing actions by these leaders as grandiose, reinforcing the claim that leaders are heroic individuals. Bass even claims that 'the best leaders are both transformational and transactional' (ibid.: 21). Viewing leadership as position-based, this claim argues that only those who are formally-appointed can exhibit transformational and transactional leadership. As an example, Phills (2005) highlights Steve Job's effective vertical leadership during a time when Apple had experienced major setbacks after he temporarily left the company. Therefore, as aptly said by Crevani, Lindgren and Packendorff (2007: 41), 'both in the literature and in organizational practice, it seems to be impossible to speak of leadership without speaking of leaders'.

Accepting that leadership is only accessible to those at the top of the hierarchy has denigrating effects on less advantaged members of organisations. Those without formal positions may well be discouraged from taking vital leadership roles that could facilitate organisational success (Grint, 2005). They may feel unable to take risks, show initiative, or take responsibility, to name just a few negative effects. Grint continues that such situations may well result in 'an extremely bureaucratic and torpid organization' (ibid.). Decisions and changes may take a longer period of time as they need to be filtered through multiple layers of hierarchy, leaving the organisations slow to adapt in a rapid business climate. On the other hand, because

authority is concentrated among those 'in charge', weak or ineffective leadership at the top may potentially impede the entire productivity of organisations. Not only that, formally-appointed leaders will be pressured to carry out most of the leadership tasks and to have expertise on all aspects of work. Because officially designated workplace roles have become increasingly complex, and these leaders and other members are reliant on each other, researchers have proposed that the future for leadership scenarios should be more team-based.

In the following section, I discuss succinctly the concept of post- heroic leadership, before exploring how leadership is rooted in social interactions, and thus leadership is *done* rather than is a formal social category. This approach to *doing* leadership is where the current study is positioned.

2.4.5 Post- heroic leadership

In recent years, the complexity of managing organisations has led to an interest in leadership that is not limited to formally appointed leaders, but is a conjoint practice distributed throughout an organisation (Fletcher, 2004; Ensley et al., 2006). The emergence of this approach is due to the demands of organisational jobs that are increasingly complex and exhausting, thus relying on collaborative and dynamic effort as a way to broaden the competence in managing tasks. Also known as collective, collaborative, shared, distributed or post-heroic leadership, this paradigm shift has focused less on leaders' capabilities or 'heroic actions from people from the top' (Fletcher, 2004), but instead on collective work between team members, recasting the relationships as a more relational and interdependent entity. Both leaders and team members are reliant on each other, and this situation has indirectly highlighted the importance of follower involvement in shaping the direction of the organisation and the development of leadership potential. Followers share leadership responsibilities with the formally-appointed leaders and single individuals may be relieved of unrealistic and harmful workloads. Such scenarios are claimed to have 'increased the need for a more flexible workforce, full utilization of knowledge, which can in part be achieved through the synergies of team-based knowledge' (Pearce, 2004: 47; Crevani, Lindgren and Packendorff, 2007).

This leads us to a consideration of post-heroic leadership, which is an approach that shifts the perspective from 'viewing leadership as a single-person activity to viewing it as collective construction processes' (Crevani, Lindgren and Packendorff, 2007: 41). At times, the subordinates even work amongst themselves in a context that is independent of formally-appointed leaders. In Choi and Schnurr (2014), the authors demonstrate the processes of leadership within a team that does not have a formally-appointed leader or chair. Although the team is 'leaderless', the authors illustrate several leadership activities that are performed among members at different points of the interaction.

Some scholars claim that the concepts of vertical leadership and post-heroic leadership could actually be merged (Pearce, 2004; Ensley et al., 2006). Using the term 'collaborative leadership' in referring to collective efforts in leading, Pearce (2004) asserts that this approach in combination with vertical leadership are the future in leadership scenarios. With today's developments in team-based work, traditional vertical leadership may not always be appropriate. However, collaborative leadership may also pose several problems when it is enacted. A lack of requisite skills, knowledge and abilities to carry out tasks can cause problems among teams that practise collaborative leadership (Pearce, 2004). For this reason, Pearce (ibid.) asserts that collaborative leadership is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. For example, Ensley et al. (2006), who studied the functions of vertical and shared leadership in two different start-up firms, found that shared leadership is more effective than vertical leadership in new ventures. However, vertical leadership still plays a crucial role, especially during the early stages of establishing a new venture. Ensley et al. (2006: 227) emphasise that the initial period of identifying business opportunities and forming objectives, seeking potential stakeholders and suppliers, and employing staff, is usually done by a single person. As a firm develops, however, it becomes more practical if leadership is handled collectively by several individuals with various skills.

The shift to this collective way of doing leadership has consequently blurred formerly grandiose images of formally-appointed leaders and the various leadership behaviours that are associated with them. That is, while some of the tasks are pre-

allocated to formal leaders, these responsibilities can be negotiated and accessed by other members to perform too. Leadership behaviours are not possessed exclusively by formal leaders, but can be oriented towards the subordinates to *do* leadership and make contributions in workplace activities. For instance, in Clifton's (2008) study on *doing* leadership, the author demonstrates how DM activities such as setting the agenda, changing topic and announcing decisions are distributed and shared among members. Similarly, Crevani, Lindgren and Packendorff (2007) shift the view of leadership from person-oriented to a matter of collectively-constructed. Highlighting the concept of a leader and a co-leader, the authors emphasise that shared leadership encourages the delegation of tasks and negotiation of power and organisational roles between members, thereby involving many people and making use of the various competences that exist (ibid.: 63). The data, which is sourced from interviews with four different types of organisations (independent schools, a private theatre, and a small music industry corporation), identify themes such as leadership development in respect to collective leadership, how leadership is exercised and who exercises it, how leadership is exercised in and outside work, and the personal lives of formally-appointed leaders. Although the interviews are conducted with individuals in top positions only, the participants claim that the organisation's dynamics may be improved with different people and different personalities collectively managing. With the emphasis on leadership as a social process, the authors make the explicit claim that interactions could also reveal ideologies and moral norms in society that shape leadership practices and theories. These authors acknowledge that leadership is constructed discursively between members and those who manage to influence the process are *doing* leadership.

Leadership can be negotiated, shifted and distributed among members, hence it is not static nor does it belong exclusively to those in higher positions. In a study that takes an explicit social constructionist perspective, Baxter (2014) shows the significance of the power of leadership language and feminist linguistics. The participants in her study are students of business and management and they are observed in a task of building a paper tower. The participants, who do not assign themselves a leader, are observed to exhibit leadership behaviours and these

emerge regardless of gender. Analysing leadership through their linguistic strategies, this study reveals that leadership is collectively shared and contested. This builds on work on discursive leadership that emphasises the importance of language for '*doing*' business leadership, whereby those who manage to influence the discussion emerge as the most influential member in leadership. Regardless of gender, positions or cultural values, every member has the opportunity to *do* leadership through their linguistic competence, at various points of the discussion. Clifton (2008), Crevani, Lindgren and Packendorff (2007), Baxter (2014) and others (Cunliffe, 2001; Fairhurst, 2007; Mullany, 2011), align with the notion of leadership as a social process that is constructed between members across different positions. This perspective has increasingly contested 'the value of grand theories of leadership in favour of a social constructionist or 'discursive' approach that posits the centrality of language for 'doing' leadership' (Baxter, 2014: 427).

As I have indicated earlier, this study positions itself within a social constructionist perspective, acknowledging leadership as a process of influencing the management of meaning (Clifton, 2012: 149). In the following section, I review several studies that utilise day-to-day interactions in the workplace in the analysis of leadership as a social process. These studies reflect the notion of leadership as an act of *doing* by all members, rather than understanding the concept of leadership as *being* a leader.

2.4.6 Post-heroic leadership: a paradox?

'Post- heroic leadership is a paradigm shift in what it means to be a leader' (Fletcher, 2003: 1). Gone are images of organisations that centre around leaders in the top positions who take on leadership roles; instead, the concept of shared responsibilities within a team is stressed (Pearce and Conger, 2003). The post-heroic approach focuses on two or more persons in the process of doing leadership, wherein the individuals feel the same degree of ownership over the units that they have worked on. It also opens the possibility that 'the act of leadership [is] not simply a unidirectional process of leader to led but, rather, a more complex one in which subordinates and their needs might influence the leader as well' (Pearce and Conger,

2003: 7). By shifting to this perspective, new patterns of how leadership is exercised in practice can be observed (see Section 2.5).

However, despite the claim that the leaders at the top of organisations have ‘gone’, one may argue that the classic leaders are still at the top, as observed in many workplaces. This situation is particularly prevalent in organisations with many levels of hierarchy, e.g. banks or universities. In such contexts, leadership work is still embedded within the concept of traditional leadership where most of the ‘heroic’ work is only done by the leaders. The leaders in the top positions are often assumed to be ‘charismatic’ and ‘efficient’ and have the utmost authority within the organisations. Think of Steve Jobs in Apple Inc, Richard Branson in Virgin or SM Nasimuddin SM Amin in Naza Group, who are amongst the successful leaders and aspiring change-makers leading successful companies and wielding strong influence in the business world. They are corporate leaders who chart overall business strategies and the direction of the brand, and motivate people to engage with their visions. While it is certainly true that these leaders and many more reputable leaders have the most influence, nevertheless, such a view tends to overlook the fact that these leaders are facilitated by their great seconds-in-command.

According to the website allaboutstevejobs.com, Jobs distributed the traditional duties of Chief Executive Officer to his executive teams and second-in-command and eventual successor, Tim Cook, while Jobs enjoyed ‘creating products, recruiting and marketing and being the public face of the company’ (<https://allaboutstevejobs.com>). Cook, who was at that time Apple’s Chief Operating Officer, was responsible for ‘all company’s worldwide sales and operations, including end-to-end management of Apple’s supply chain, sales activities and service and support in all markets and countries’ (<https://www.apple.com/uk/leadership/tim-cook/>). Cook was the person responsible for leading Apple’s Macintosh division and held a crucial role in maintaining the company’s relationship with suppliers. Of course, it was Jobs who provided the direction for Apple, yet we cannot ignore the key roles played by Cook, together with other executive members who contributed to all aspects, issues and decisions involving Apple (ibid.). According to Heenan and

Bennis (1999: 3), ‘...every successful organization has, at its heart, a cadre of co-leaders - key players who do the work, even if they receive little of the glory’.

Jobs, Cook and the executive teams show that leadership is not merely about the particular individual at the top; it extends beyond that. With other people involved in the process, leadership is far more complex than what it may seem to be. Hence, now is the time for researchers to provide a multi-faceted view of leadership, and one of the ways is by acknowledging the roles held by (less famous) alliances that contribute to the success of the organisations (Heenan and Bennis, 1999).

2.5 Empirical research on leadership discourse

A great deal of empirical research on leadership discourse emanates from the study of workplace communication such as the LWP. The projects have produced much research focusing on leadership in relation to culture, ethnicity and gender (Holmes and Marra, 2002; Holmes and Stubbe, 2003; Holmes and Schnurr, 2006; Holmes, 2007, 2017; Vine et al., 2008; Holmes, Vine and Marra, 2009; Holmes, et al., 2011). This research has widely explored how leadership is enacted and conceptualised, and has mainly taken place in New Zealand workplace settings. The limited and overly simplistic models and theories of leadership are, thus, challenged.

Apart from New Zealand, leadership discourse has been widely researched in many places in the world, including the UK (Mullany, 2007; Baxter, 2010, 2014; Angouri and Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011; Wodak et al., 2011), Denmark (Ladegaard, 2011), France (Clifton; 2012; 2017), Malaysia, Dubai and Spain (Svennevig, 2011), Japan (Saito, 2010, 2011), Hong Kong (Schnurr and Mak, 2011; Ladegaard, 2012; Schnurr and Zayts, 2011), Singapore (Horan, 2014), and in a Middle Eastern context (Baxter and Al-A’ali, 2014). These studies have looked at a range of leadership activities, including transactional and relational tasks that occur in the workplace. The transactional-oriented tasks in practice that were researched include setting the agenda (Holmes, 2006), building consensus (Wodak et al., 2011), issuing directives (Takano, 2005; Vine, 2009; Schnurr and Mak, 2011), requesting information (Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris, 1996; Callahan, 2011), managing disagreement (Angouri, 2012; Choi and

Schnurr, 2014), gatekeeping (Van de Mierop and Schnurr, 2014) and making decisions (Schnurr, 2009b; Clifton, 2012, 2017; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012). All of these practices are typical activities of leadership, and they are performed with the aim of advancing an organisation's objectives. Moving away from functionalist and prescriptive ways of doing leadership, these researches utilise discourse analysis as the prevalent method to study leadership, and have contributed greatly to our current understanding on the linguistic aspects of leadership.

Studying leadership *in situ* is advantageous since it allows the researcher both to focus directly on the context in which the processes of leadership occur and demonstrate 'the highly situated nature of leadership' (Larsson and Lundholm, 2013: 1103). As shown by Holmes and Marra (2004) in their study of New Zealand workplaces, factors such as the types of interaction, the Community of Practice (henceforth CofP) or workplace culture, and the relative seriousness of the issue involved, affect the strategies deployed by effective leaders in managing conflictual views. Wodak et al. (2011: 612), on the other hand, have found that 'a shift in standing of an individual in the team and the meeting genre might mediate the leaders' participation and their ability to control interactions within the team' and these influence the decision outcomes of meetings. These studies suggest that context influences the performance of leadership activities.

Further, the studies of leadership in real-life settings help to uncover a range of different discourse strategies that are utilised in the accomplishment of leadership. In the same study, Wodak et al. (2011) outlined several leadership tactics employed by the chair that play a key role in reaching consensus in meetings. The authors illustrated that the chair affects the meeting positively by using five strategies for consensus formation, namely bonding, encouraging, directing, modulating and re/committing. However, the chair could also negatively influence the meeting by hindering the processes of consensus building. Holmes (2007), in turn, discovered two distinctive ways that two leaders managed workplace meetings. One of the leaders was found to apply democratic and participatory DM and hold spiral discussions, and her followers were allowed to take turns whenever it was convenient for them. In contrast, another leader utilised highly-structured and

controlling strategies in meetings. The members were systematically allocated with time to contribute and the discussions were conducted with a unilateral approach. Holmes also noted that the meetings began even when some participants had not yet arrived. During the closing, the leader tended to be more direct and decisive by overtly making a formal announcement. Similarly, Wilson (2017), who investigated leadership in a rugby team, found two different leadership styles in forward and back teams. He concluded that the local norms within each team influenced the leadership enactment. The forward team fostered a more solidarity-led approach due to the supportive environment among the members, meanwhile the back team observed a traditional hierarchical model resulting from a competitive environment. These studies illustrate that there is no definitive way of enacting leadership activities and that the interaction practices within the immediate contexts help develop the leadership strategies and styles.

In other contexts, studies in this field have also demonstrated the enactment of leadership through the process of influencing others. Using CA, Clifton (2006) showed how influence by a manager was achieved through making summaries of what had been mentioned, or as Clifton termed it, formulation. This activity is said to 'have the power to fix past and present organisational reality' (Clifton, 2006: 210) and the individual could exert influence by altering a future state of affairs. Similarly, in Clifton's (2017) work on DM, he found that those who made salient contributions in DM have the most influence and emerged with a leader's identity. Despite that, he also acknowledged that determining who has the most influence is not an easy task. In concluding the study, he claims that the person who manages to announce the decision claims the leader's identity. In this case, it was the leader of the team who successfully claimed that identity. In a study of leadership at a bank, Larsson and Lundholm (2013) showed that resistance to suggestions made by others enabled the issues discussed to be reinterpreted. Such resistance provides the opportunity for the individual to exercise influence, and hence, manage the enactment of leadership.

Given the importance of investigating leadership in real-life contexts through and in discourse, these studies offer insights into how leadership in practice is achieved in face-to-face and virtual communication (see Section 2.7 for studies on leadership in

virtual contexts). Leadership is a situated practice and thus also shows that socio-contextual cues play prominent roles in uncovering the processes of leadership. These studies also show the importance of leadership discourse as a way of aiding understanding in the processes of leadership and how it is constructed.

2.5.5 Criticisms on post-heroic approach

Although post-heroic studies are praised (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2016), this work has been subjected to much criticism. In the following discussion, I address criticisms faced in post-heroic studies of leadership and how these criticisms have impacted on discourse analytical studies. I also explore how discourse approaches to leadership could help elucidate some of the tensions that arise from these debates in much more critical ways.

Leadership is 'anything and everything'

Investigating leadership performance by different participants is indeed useful in challenging heroic and individual leadership, yet post-heroic leadership is criticised for its broad and loose concept of leadership.

As mentioned by Alvesson and Spicer (2014: 8):

Just looking at the local meaning that actors attribute to notions of leadership diverts our attention from the possibility that very different people- from CEOs to deacons to supermarket supervisors- may want to identify themselves as 'leaders' and as eager to 'do leadership'

The collective work in leadership is claimed to be merely 'the rephrasing of teamwork or mutual adjustment' hence 'there is a minor element of heroization of peer relations and any form of influencing act' (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2016: 143). According to Alvesson and Kärreman (2016: 146), 'everybody can do leadership [and] nobody is supposed to do followership'. Instead of categorising all acts as leadership, Alvesson and Kärreman (2016) suggest utilising other valid terms to aptly describe acts that occur in interactions. For instance, terms such as 'peer relations, professionalism, autonomy and co-workership' would contribute to a robust conceptualisation of leadership (ibid.: 142). This endeavour would shift the concept

of leadership from all-encompassing to a narrower definition (Learmonth and Morrell, 2016). This debate clearly demonstrates the lack of a well-defined concept in post-heroic leadership that leads to an inability to recognise the difference between leadership and non-leadership.

In relation to discourse analytical approaches to leadership, there is a risk that by embracing the concept of post-heroic leadership, we might identify all behaviours as instances of leadership. This is because, according to this perspective, anyone can undertake leadership behaviours. For instance, when defining leadership, Holmes et al. (2011: 7) say 'regardless of their job titles, many individuals may display leadership behaviour in particular contexts'. Similarly, Clifton (2017: 66) mentions that those with the most influence in managing meaning will emerge as the leader, yet he acknowledges that working out 'who is the most salient in this process is a debatable issue, since leadership is best considered in a holistic sense as a group process in which relationships are formed (and dissolved)'. While these definitions are useful in highlighting the roles of other members and their collaborative effort in leadership performance, they are, however, potentially overgeneralising. The concept of leadership remains broadly defined, and undertaking any workplace task can be viewed as doing leadership. If we were to acknowledge that all performance is leadership and all the workplace practices are leadership acts, we risk oversimplifying the complexity and rich details of workplace interactions.

We all understand that leadership has moved forward with notions of post-heroic and while the use of a discourse analytical approach has always been widely recognised (Mullany, 2007; Vine et al., 2008; Schnurr, 2009a; Holmes et al., 2011; Baxter, 2014; Wilson, 2017), much of this research has remarkably paid little attention to the significance of legitimisation, i.e. the support given to those doing leadership by others. A notable exception to this is a study by Schnurr and Zayts (2011); leadership attempts by the formal leader are acknowledged as unsuccessful, because the leader is repeatedly contested by other participants. While I agree with the claim that all members should be acknowledged for their leadership performances and that leadership could be collaboratively constructed, I align with Schnurr (fc) about the need to make clear that some acts might be considered only

attempts at leadership or general contributions to overall leadership performance, rather than successful leadership. Hence, following the work of Schnurr (fc), I agree that a discourse analytical approach could be a useful tool to examine the complex processes of leadership. With its emphasis on micro- and macro-level interactions, this analytical tool is capable of determining 'how leadership is collaboratively enacted – sometimes harmoniously co-constructed but at other times vehemently challenged and rejected – throughout an interaction' (ibid.: 14). Subsequently, analysis utilising the respective approach will not only demonstrate how successful leadership is co-constructed, but also will show how leadership attempts are supported or contested by other members. A detailed inspection of leadership processes during an interaction provides empirical evidence of complex discursive activities of leadership, that subsequently allow the analysts to examine these activities as instances of leadership or not.

In addressing this criticism, my research aims to identify how attempts at leadership made by the participants in the subordinate positions are considered as the successful enactment of leadership, thus highlighting the activities between taking the lead and simply contributing to the DM processes. In line with discourse analytical research that challenges heroic leadership, this study will generate robust evidence to illustrate the intricate processes of leadership, demonstrating how different people take on different roles and that not all attempts at leadership can be classified as successful. The analysis is hoped to increase a better understanding of workplace practices that are indexed as leadership and elucidate the criticisms that leadership is almost 'anything and everything'.

In light of this view, the next section will discuss several studies undertaken from the non-traditional leadership constellation; an alternative to leader-centric leadership.

2.6 Alternative constellations of leadership

We have witnessed a multitude of approaches and developments that provide the conceptual grounding of leadership. The literature on collective concepts of

leadership has labelled this approach with various terms, such as 'shared', 'distributed', 'collective', 'collaborative', 'integrative', 'relational', 'post-heroic' and 'plural' leadership (Bolden, 2011; Denis, Langley and Sergi, 2012), and these terms are often used interchangeably. Although the terms 'distributed', 'shared' and 'collaborative' have been specifically differentiated by leadership scholars, they all reflect a similar concern with understanding the concept of leadership (Hallinger and Heck, 2010: 97). Thorpe, Gold and Lawler (2011) claim that the term DL encompasses a variety of leadership efforts and is an umbrella term that reflects other forms of collective leadership including co-, shared, and self-managed teams. Similarly, Bolden (2011) states that DL accounts for all ideas of leadership forms that promote collective and social processes as a means to understand leadership. In the context of their study, Hallinger and Heck (2010) utilise the term 'collaborative leadership' in describing the school-wide leadership actions that are shared among the principal, teachers, administrators and others. Schnurr and Chan (2011) state that leadership constellations can be placed along a continuum with co-leadership at one end, shared leadership in the middle and DL at the other. Despite the common understanding and highly flexible terminology for the alternative approaches of leadership, there are other researchers who have defined three main constellations of leadership in more relatively defined categories, namely co-, shared and DL, and the ensuing sections describe these.

2.6.1 Co-leadership

Drawing on the widely cited definition from Heenan and Bennis (1999: 5), the term co-leadership is described as 'two leaders in vertically contiguous positions who share the responsibilities of leadership'. Co-leaders are described as 'truly exceptional deputies – extremely talented men and women, often more capable than their more highly acclaimed superiors' (ibid.: 6), even though they may possess different abilities from their superiors. It has been suggested that the success of co-leadership is dependent on the effectiveness of the co-leaders in their roles and their leadership performance (Vine et al., 2008).

Studies of co-leadership that appeared in the early 1950s (Pearce and Conger, 2003: 8) typically focused on the higher ranks of organisations, such as the relationships between 'CEO - CFO; president - vice-president; chancellor - vice-chancellor; prime minister - deputy prime minister; minister - senior civil servant; and managing director - director' (Vine et al., 2008: 340). This situation could also be reflected in the example of Jobs and his second-in-command, Cook, previously mentioned. Jackson and Parry (2011), on the other hand, illustrate the trio that collaboratively run Google as a co-leadership of a larger team. They argue that co-leadership is not only limited to pair work, but can also be practised in a group with several individuals, i.e. within the top management teams. Additionally, co-leadership can also manifest itself in other social contexts, such as in group counselling (Threadcraft and Wilcoxon, 2008), group work among students (Schopler and Galinsky, 1981), healthcare sectors (Reid-Ponte, 2004), mentor-protégé relationships (Wexler and Steele, 1978) and in supervisory contexts in which co-leadership is enacted between supervisee and trainee (Stempler, 1993).

Co-leadership values equal abilities between the principal and co-principal leader. Sally (2002) provides an overview of ancient co-leadership teams. Roman co-leaders were claimed to serve fixed terms in which they arrived and departed together. If any of the co-leaders quit, sustained injuries in battle, or died of old age, they were usually not replaced with a new co-leader. This was to prevent 'an asymmetric pairing between an entrenched incumbent and a novice, or between a lame duck and a rising star' (ibid.: 87). If a co-leader departed unexpectedly, a colleague of equal position would fill in the position to ensure an effective co-leadership duo. Heenan and Bennis (1999: 11) assert that great leaders hire people who are good or better than them because they will become their co-leaders. This illustrates that groups of co-leaders are often of the same position. Even if they possess different abilities, they are still on a par with one another.

Moving to a relatively recent study on co-leadership, Holmes et al. (2011) investigated the strategies in co-leadership of four different workplaces in New Zealand. Two main leaders are reported to have taken the responsibilities for different aspects of leadership. The first leader was responsible for providing the

bigger picture and the vision for the company's future direction, meanwhile the second-in-command took a leading role in 'creating a team' by nurturing good relations among staff (Holmes et al., 2011: 119). In the same study, Holmes et al. (2011) illustrated a rather different kind of co-leadership partnership in which the division manager worked closely with team members of different positions. In meetings, senior members would take leading roles during different phases of the discussion based on their expertise on the topic. Meanwhile, in practical day-to-day aspects of their work, the team members were expected to self-lead, based on their skills and the nature of work they were engaged in. In relational-oriented tasks, the senior members and the second-in-command took charge.

The findings in the study by Holmes et al. (2011) indicate that the concept of co-leadership is not parallel, as implied in most of the literature. While the saying 'two heads are better than one' is often used to describe co-leadership, Holmes and colleagues state that co-leadership is not limited to just two individuals, but could be performed by several leaders. The fluidity of roles and the nature of the work have influenced the enactment of co-leadership, as roles dynamically shift at different times and in different contexts. Co-leaders must skilfully integrate the different facets of leadership into their performance, as appropriate (Holmes et al., 2011: 127).

2.6.2 Shared leadership

Shared leadership is defined as a dynamic, interactive influence process among 'a group of individuals for which the objective is to lead one another to achieve group or organisational goals or both' (Pearce and Conger, 2003: 167). Unlike co-leadership that some literature defines as two individuals with similar skills or on par with each other, shared leadership, on the other hand, occurs when two or more individuals engage in leadership in an effort to influence and direct fellow members (Bergman et al., 2012: 18). The influence process in this constellation of leadership often involves peer or lateral influence, and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence (Pearce and Conger, 2003). Shared leadership involves 'dynamic rotations' amongst a set of individuals at various stages (Pearce and Conger, 2003: 1; see also Holmes et al., 2011), and leadership here is not centralised

in the hands of a specific person who takes on the role of a superior. 'Depending on the skills required at a particular time, individuals who are not formally selected as leaders can rise to the occasion to exhibit leadership and then step back at other times to allow others to lead' (Pearce and Conger, 2003: 168). An instance of shared responsibilities can be observed among academics of equivalent authority, where the responsibilities in administrative work are rotational.

Shared leadership is consistently found to positively affect the members of the settings. In an educational sector, Hooker and Csikszentmihalyi (2003) show that the leader, who holds a faculty position, successfully empowers his students by encouraging trust, autonomy and ownership to shape the outcome of any collaborative project given to them. In healthcare sectors, Konu and Viitanen (2008) describe shared leadership practices as collaborative and encouraging, which positively influence the flow of information and teamwork. Shared leadership also brings uniformity to DM, as it helps to define responsibilities and enhances communication.

Ironically, shared leadership does not always drive organisations to success. Miles and Watkins (2007) mention that shared duties place challenges on organisational priorities. Miles and Watkins (ibid.: 95) observe that a team that includes 'people with significant differences in terms of their assigned tasks, areas of expertise, mind-sets, or social roles' risk moving in different directions, particularly when organisational environments become gradually complex. A similar view is also held by Kocolowski (2010), who indicate that leadership might be undesirable at certain times, as there may be a lack of a shared direction and commitment within groups that practise this type of leadership. These aspects can limit group members from engaging effectively.

Such paradoxes of shared leadership show that its success depends on the actors who enact leadership in that context. Whilst shared leadership could boost a team's skills and expertise (Hooker and Csikszentmihalyi, 2003), it is also important to note that ineligible persons who take up the role of leadership would make the working environment undesirable to others (Boardman, 2001; Kocolowski, 2010).

2.6.3 Distributed leadership (DL)

In DL, influence and roles are dispersed widely to the team members. Although DL creates more opportunities for others to be involved in leadership roles, this does not rebuff the vital role of leaders (Bolden, 2007). Instead, it entails all aspects of leadership being enacted effectively by several members. Also known as dispersed leadership (Jackson and Parry, 2011), this notion of leadership is interpreted differently by leadership scholars. Jackson and Parry (2011) assert that leadership is only allocated to individuals whose abilities are on a par with the abilities of principal leaders. On the other hand, Vine et al. (2008: 341) and Choi and Schnurr (2014) describe DL as a constellation that leads a team 'collectively and independently of formal leaders' in a group that does not have a leader. Here, the team members shift positions as the one in charge, regardless of their positions. Nonetheless, both perspectives agree upon the principle that DL can be disseminated to team members at the same hierarchical level.

DL is variously seen in the field of education in which the leadership is not only limited to school governors and teachers, but also promoted to parents, students and the local community (Spillane, 2005, 2006; Bolden, 2007; Court, 2010; Spillane et al., 2015). Nonetheless, DL does not imply that everyone is, or even should become, a leader, but this concept recognises the work of all individuals who may be involved in leadership and management work. While the leaders occupy the leaders' roles, the tasks and influence are widely dispersed. Using the term 'stretched' in referring to the distributed practice, leadership is stretched over 'two or more leaders, followers and aspects of situation such as tools, structures and routines that enable and constrain that practice' (Spillane and Sherer, 2004: 30). Such aspects are paramount in capturing the complexity of leadership practices as they constitute and shape the practices of leadership in a reciprocal relationship (Spillane et al., 2015).

A distributed perspective stresses leadership practices that are framed in joint interactions between leaders and followers, and their situation. 'The situation offers particulars such as tools of various kinds, organisational structures, routines and language that contribute to defining leadership practice as an interaction with people

(i.e. the Breakfast Club and test data)' (Spillane and Sherer, 2004: 8). Parallels with this concept can be seen in interviews, surveys, observations, shadowing and recordings of leadership practices (ibid.).

A study on DL in a school setting by Spillane and Sherer (2004: 11) claims that the roles of leaders are not necessarily always performed by those ordinarily associated with leadership (i.e. principal, grade level teacher). The roles are also often constructed by others (i.e. teachers) with no formal leadership positions. Depending on the situation, 'teachers are often constructed into leadership roles by others' (ibid.: 12) which is done through collaborated, co-practicing and collective leadership. Collaborated distribution occurs when one or two people work together at the same time and place. Co-practicing, on the other hand, is when the members work independently but interdependently of one another. Collective distribution refers to leadership practice in which the 'leadership tasks are performed at a particular time for the execution of some leadership functions' (ibid.: 14). In a recent study by Spillane et al. (2015), the distributed perspective was identified in the perceptions of novice school principals' understanding of the distributed approach to school leadership, and these participants were more likely to engage in DL through micro-managing.

In a different approach to DL, Choi and Schnurr (2014) analysed leadership in a leaderless working team and observed that leadership activities were distributed among various team members at different points throughout the meeting. DL was identified through inviting others to explain and challenge views, ratify each other's suggestions and outline future directions. Nonetheless, the authors claim that the sharing of leadership roles is not always harmonious. This is reflected through the use of the pronouns 'I' and 'we', where the participants struggle over who gets to do leadership. The study concludes that although the team was 'leaderless', DL still took place among the members. The authors also summarise that the disagreements that occurred among the investigated members were complicated and lengthy, particularly because the team did not have a designated leader who could have offered solutions to the conflict.

The literature reviewed above shows that DL does not necessarily occur in a team that has a formal leader, but it shows that the terminology also refers to a team that is leaderless. It is clear that the term DL is loosely used and so is not utilised in discussing certain contexts that fulfil certain criteria (i.e. having formal leaders).

The literature exploring different facets of leadership indicates that these concepts are interwoven, closely related to each other and the terminology is used interchangeably. In essence, the constellations promote the notion of collective leadership, and if collective leadership is enacted, it could be enacted in pairs or in a group of several members.

For the purpose of this study, I characterise leadership practices within this team as DL. This is due to several reasons as outlined below:

1. Similar to other constellations of leadership, DL goes beyond acknowledging multiple individuals, their roles and positions (Spillane, 2006). Yet, what makes it slightly different than the other concepts is that DL does not rebuff the vital role of leaders (Bolden, 2007); in fact, it acknowledges all aspects of leadership enacted effectively by several members. The claim by Bolden nicely captures leadership practices within the investigated team. The investigated team, the TEFL team, is hierarchically structured with the hierarchic superiors acting as the chair and the advisor. These leaders are assumed because of hierarchy and are expected to perform most of the leadership tasks in DM. In the analysis chapter (Chapter 5), I highlight the leadership roles that are expected of the formal leaders. In Chapter 6, on the other hand, I demonstrate how the ordinary members take on leadership roles and the strategies they used to achieve leadership. Based on observations at the micro-level in interactions in meetings and the WA, all members are found to contribute actively to the discussions and on certain occasions take on leadership according to their expertise and knowledge on the topics discussed. Some of the members even lead discussions with and without their formal leaders. On occasions where the members lead independently of their formal leaders, it is the latter who often make

announcements to mark that decisions have been made. It is clear to me that, even in a case where hierarchy is clearly challenged and leadership roles are distributed across the group, at various points of DM processes, the prerogative roles of the formal leaders are still enacted by them, and the leadership claims by the ordinary members do not necessarily rebuff the vital roles of the leaders (see Chapter 4).

2. DL makes it apparent that at its heart lies a leadership practice that is observed through interactions between several leaders and subordinates and the contexts in which it occurred (Spillane and Sherer, 2004). With a pragmatic focus on leadership as practice, the concept of DL also aligns with epistemological and ontological stances of social constructionism that focus on constructions of leadership practices through workplace interactions, and contextual and social factors. In simpler words, DL does not only concern individuals that contribute to leadership but also the factors that influence the enactment of leadership. DL asks the 'what' and 'how' of leadership to understand the practice of leadership and this is parallel to the aim of the study, i.e. to explore how leadership is discursively done in DM processes.

The leadership constellation in my research could be described as vertical with its clearly identified leader in the hierarchy. However, in the forthcoming analysis chapters, the team is shown to practice DL, as observed in their DM processes. There have been situations where participants in subordinate positions take on roles that are typically associated with leaders, such as initiating topics, bringing up new issues, switching topics and even ratifying some decisions. All team members cooperate, negotiate, challenge and perform multiple roles to reach decisions. By doing this, they all contribute towards the practice of doing leadership.

In this section, I provided details of leadership studies including a brief overview of leadership psychology, discursive leadership and post-heroic leadership. I also explained my reasons for utilising the term DL in characterising the leadership practices in the investigated team. In the following section, I discuss bodies of work in DM, and DM and leadership.

2.7 Decisions and decision-making (DM)

This section discusses studies conducted on decisions and DM. I start by considering the definitions of decisions and DM which are derived from several disciplines, the different foci in DM research and some of the issues raised with regard to conceptualising decisions and DM. Further, I address issues of identifying decisions and how the decision models by Marra (2003) fit into my dataset. In the final section, I review several studies on leadership and DM by particularly focusing on the activities of DM that equate to leadership.

2.7.1 Definition of decisions and decision-making

Identifying a working definition for the term 'decision' is not easy (Marra, 2003). Instead of describing a definition of decision *per se*, many researchers integrate the concept of DM when explaining the term 'decision'. Early definitions of a decision from a management and organisational point of view see 'decision' as a specific commitment to action (Huisman, 2011). A DM process, on the other hand, is 'a set of actions and dynamic factors that begin with identifying a stimulus for action and end with the specific commitment to action' (Mintzberg, Raisinghani and Théorêt, 1976: 246). Miller and Wilson (2006: 469) describe a decision as a rational choice based on logical connections between cause and effect. This is the process whereby the decision-maker identifies a problem, searches for potential solutions, prioritises preferences according to a set of identified criteria and arrives at an optimising choice. These two definitions illustrate DM as a straightforward episode that goes through the expected procedures and potential outcomes. In contrast to this widely-cited definition of a decision, Boden (1994: 84) notes that a decision is frequently invisible and that it is the incremental process of DM that needs to be observed. She adds that in formal meetings, decisions such as rubber-stamping or resolution take place in another time and place. She also notes that the actual day-to-day decisions in organisations are not typically accomplished in large formal settings. Rather, these are finalised in smaller, specialised meetings. DM is viewed as a non-linear and repeated process that does not necessarily end with the accomplishing of decisions within one context, hence often the moment that a decision has been achieved is not

clearly known. These views contrast with Mintzberg et al. (1976) and Miller and Wilson (2006).

The field of linguistics also demonstrates clash of perspectives of a decision and DM. Huisman (2001: 72), in her study on DM, opines that 'a decision-making episode of a meeting is a snapshot of developing and constantly renewing courses of action in organizations' (ibid.: 76). Because of this, 'many decisions cannot be straightforwardly identified in the talk. They are largely invisible, cannot be spotted as concrete utterances in an interaction and have an ephemeral quality' (ibid.). Marra (2003: 10) defines decisions as 'a recognisable activity and are classified as decision topics within meetings that require making resolutions'. On the other hand, Angouri and Angelidou (2012) define a decision as a construct that the participants understand as committing the company or employees to a certain course of action. Although the definition of a DM process is not particularly highlighted, the authors suggest that the strategies the participants draw upon in the process of reaching decisions are 'range, fuzziness and subtlety' (ibid.: 63). This view indicates that DM episodes are rather complex as opposed to being a straightforward process.

Literature on DM in the fields of management and linguistics provide definitions that are multi-faceted. At one end, the DM process is viewed as a linear, straightforward activity that occurs within an identifiable locality and it is eventually gets ratified and implemented as an action. At the opposite end, DM is viewed as a spiral, cyclical process that is messy, in which it is challenging to identify a decision at the moment it is reached. My study is interested in the latter definition. As will be shown in Chapter 4, DM processes in the investigated setting constitute of various types of DM, hence supporting the claim that DM processes are complex processes (Boden, 1994; Huisman, 2001; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Lohrová, 2014; Halvorsen and Sarangi, 2015).

The subsequent section will discuss the conceptual issues surrounding decisions and DM arising from the previous literature.

2.7.2 Conceptual issues of decisions

Decisions are not 'straightforward and instantly obvious' (Huisman, 2001: 70) and they are not achieved in an 'explicit and linear way' (Angouri and Angelidou, 2012: 62). Although they are reached at particular phases of interactions, decisions constantly face the possibility of changes and modifications (Boden, 1994; Huisman, 2001; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Halvorsen and Sarangi, 2015). Huisman (2001), who uses CA to explore the linguistic construct of DM talk, claims that CA does not allow the identification of the actual location of decisions within the talk but only enables the identification of episodes of DM. In response to this issue, Huisman suggests that the analyst could refer to the occurrence of decisions, by identifying the ratification made by those in authority, such as the chair (see also Clifton, 2009) or the leader. Nonetheless, this is not straightforward since the DM may involve reversion. Janis and Mann (1977) term the repetition of steps as reversion, and this causes the overall processes to be cyclical hence making the effort to identify decisions more complicated.

With the fluid nature of decisions and the repetitive steps in achieving decisions, it is a moot point for the analyst to locate the exact moment a decision is being proposed, made and ratified. Several decisions are revisited, re-proposed and even changed, altering decisions that have been agreed on earlier. In addition, the processes where decisions are being modified take place in another context, making the search for the final decision endless and uncertain. Hence, the question remains as to whether a decision that is ratified in one context is indeed a final decision, since it may be changed in another context of interaction. Such a situation is particularly relevant for this study where some decisions that are made and ratified in the meetings are modified in the WA group. This situation is in accordance with Huisman (2001: 76), who states that 'decisions should be placed in the context of a continuous stream' and Boden (1994: 22), who writes that 'decisions are real enough... but in flux of organisational life, neither decisions nor their 'reasons' stand still'. With these claims that decisions are ephemeral and best viewed as incremental processes, this study will scrutinise the DM talk that takes place in two different contexts. It may be challenging to address the question of when a DM process starts and ends, as the

decision may be changed afterwards either in the near future or otherwise, and in contexts that occur outside of the meetings and the WA group. However, the insights gained from these contexts can be used as a prototype as they illustrate the continuous processes of DM in accordance with the claim by Huisman (2001). To the best of my knowledge, there has been limited literature on DM that has addressed the issue, so it will be addressed in this study (Chapter 4). The incremental processes and intertextuality of DM in two different contexts will illustrate how decisions are revisited, negotiated and sometimes changed in the team's subsequent discussions on the WA platform.

The second conceptual issue revolves around the matter of 'decisions that take place or are made externally, such as pre-meeting decisions that require the meeting's participants to act upon' (Lohrová, 2014: 32). In other words, these decisions, also known as ready-made decisions (Clifton, 2008), are retrospectively made outside the context of the current discussion, and they are brought into the meeting for further implementation. In this case, the question remains as to whether the decision sought out beforehand is considered a decision, although the retrospective processes are not made visible to the analysts. This brings up another question regarding whether the process of implementation for future action is considered as a DM process, or merely a process of discussing the future direction of the agreed decision. This process refers to the behaviour or actions taken by the participants to realise the decisions made in practice. The concern arises due to a claim made by Marra (2003), who says that a DM process consists of an issue, a proposal for solution, and a proposal for recommendation for future action. According to Marra (2003), the difference between a proposal and a proposal of implementation is that the former is a suggestion or solution to a topic of discussion; the latter, on the other hand, is the stage where the next action is executed after a consensus on a decision is reached. Hence, when a decision occurs during a pre-meeting and is brought into a meeting, do the analysts treat the pre-meeting as a part of the DM process? And does the process in the meeting indicate the process of decision implementation? As complicated as they may sound, such processes of DM occur in my dataset. One of the instances involves two participants who make a decision outside the contexts of

the meetings and the WA platform. After a decision is achieved, they return to the WA group, announce it and seek ideas from others to implement the decision. In another instance, the team members discuss an issue regarding the students' lesson plan over the WA group and make a decision in a different setting. In light of the issues raised, the contexts involved in making a decision for this study are not only limited to meetings and the WA group, but also involve other contexts such as informal face-to-face discussion. I also acknowledge that decisions made in this study may be achieved in other settings such as emails, phone calls and online messages. Thus, while such instances will provide interesting insights into addressing the crucial question of 'where does a DM episode begin and end' and 'how can we, as analysts, capture the complexities of DM?', it is beyond the scope of my study to scrutinise the process of DM that occurs outside the meetings and WA contexts.

The issues raised contribute to ongoing attempts to unravel the complicated processes of DM and establish conceptual issues of a decision and the DM process. Issues of intertextuality between two contexts will be addressed in the analysis chapters (Chapters 4-6), other issues, on the other hand, may need to be addressed by future research. It is through investigating two contexts that this study aspires to contribute to the body of knowledge on DM from a linguistic perspective, on which (to the best of my knowledge) there has to date been little research in the field of DM.

2.7.3 Identifying decisions

It is essential for analysts to be aware that a decision may not refer to a single utterance and many decisions cannot be easily identified in talk. This is due to processes that are complex and involve 'revisiting and renewing the suggestions' (Boden, 1994: 183; Huisman, 2001). For instance, although a decision is nearly made, the group members 'express different opinions, modify the 'decision', clarify it, and agree or disagree' (Angouri and Angelidou, 2012: 63). With their fluid nature, decisions 'emerge in and from interactions' (ibid.), and so it remains a challenge for the analyst to describe DM activities because of their ephemeral qualities and messiness of DM processes (Huisman, 2001; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012).

Nevertheless, researchers have identified several ways to identify a decision. A decision could be identified through three possible elements, and this is the method I have employed in the data described later in the thesis (Chapter 4); the components are issue, solution and ratification (Marra, 2003, see Figure 2.1). When an issue is raised, a solution is proposed and further ratified by the chair (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003) or the superior (Clifton, 2017). The occurrence of these aspects gives an indication of a DM episode. Marra's DM model is similar to Lohrová's (2014), who identifies explanation, accounts and formulations as obligatory elements in DM. Wasson (2000: 468), on the other hand, explains proposal, evaluation and consensus as the recurrent patterns and describes DM as a type of adjacency pair, termed a 'bargaining sequence'. Figure 2.1 illustrates Marra's (2003: 78) baseline model for decisions. However, according to my dataset, it is not necessarily the case that the issue is initiated first. In my data, many examples indicate that issues are initiated together with the proposal within an utterance. In illustrating this, I have added a box overlapping the original box of 'issue raised' to indicate that these stages can be simultaneously initiated (see Figure 2.1).

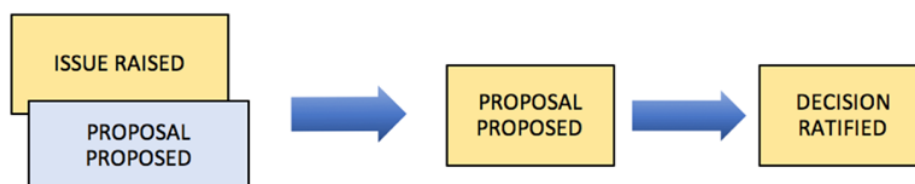


Figure 2.1 A baseline model for simple decisions (Adapted from Marra, 2003: 78)

Although her original figure shows that the stages occur one at a time, Marra acknowledges that at some points, issue and proposal can be uttered simultaneously within a turn. The original elements of a DM episode outlined by Marra are indicated in yellow boxes. The blue box that I have added to the figure to reflect DM processes in my dataset (Chapter 4). Figure 2.1 indicates a baseline model for simple decisions.

Following Marra, I decided to utilise the terms 'issue', 'proposal' and 'ratification' to describe the basic stages within the DM processes in my data.

In complex decision models, Marra indicates that the proposal stage may be revisited before the decision is finally ratified. Figure 2.2 illustrates an elaborated view of complex decision processes.

illustrate this intricate process, I have added the red arrow and the red line on the model. The red arrow and the red line provide the idea of the cyclical process where some of the decisions can still be altered even if they have been ratified earlier. In Chapter 4, I illustrate these processes in conjunction with the data to better illustrate how decisions are reached in both simple and complex DM processes.

The two models reviewed previously are one way of identifying the stages of DM and through which decisions occur within DM processes.

2.7.4 Leadership and DM

DM is at the heart of human activity and constitutes a 'daily reality for most employees' (Angouri and Angelidou, 2012: 61). Because DM shapes the future of an organisation, it has thus become a key activity in which authority is exercised (Marra, Schnurr and Holmes, 2006; Schnurr, 2009a; Baxter, 2014). In discourse analytical studies, research into DM and its relationship to leadership has been rather scarce. One reason for this might be that the concept of DM overlaps within other speech acts that occur in organisational settings, such as problem solving (Handford, 2010; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012), negotiating consensus (Wodak et al., 2011; Choi and Schnurr, 2014) and proposing future action (Asmuß and Oshima, 2012). Researchers seems to be more interested in focusing on speech acts performed within DM rather than focusing on the DM processes in relation to leadership. However, notable exceptions to this are Holmes and Stubbe (2003), Choi and Schnurr (2014), Clifton (2017) and Wilson (2017) who have specifically discussed the relationship between DM processes and leadership.

DM and positions of authority

It has been claimed that the legitimate authority that persons have based on their hierarchical standing has the effect of influencing DM processes. In a wider context, such individuals shape their organisation's prospective directions by interactively formulating the future state of affairs (Huisman, 2001). From this perspective, leadership emerges, and it is through this process that leaders can exert their authority.

Leadership can be performed through ratifying and announcing decisions. These two speech acts are claimed to be undertaken by somebody with incumbent authority (inclusive of the chair) (Marra, 2003; Clifton, 2009, 2017). Holmes and Stubbe (2003) note that a proposal that is negotiated requires ratification before it is regarded as the decision. In one of his studies on leadership, Clifton (2012) illustrates how the chairman manages to claim his institutional standing as the one in charge by announcing the decision, orienting to one of the member's prior turns as agreement and closing the topic. Clifton claims that access to discursive resources may skew the ability to do leadership in favour of people with organisational identities. In a more recent study, Clifton (2017) claims that attributing leader identity is a moot point, as most of the members play salient roles in DM. Yet, in consequence, it is the designated leader who manages to claim the leader's identity and this is done through announcing the decision. In such a situation, we could observe that the speech act of announcing the decision is an act that shows one's influence over the discussion, and this proves yet again that those who manage to announce a decision and own the final say could be argued as having the most influential role in the discussion.

Ratifying decisions could be done using different strategies. One of the common ways to ratify decisions is by expressing approval (Marra, 2003). Expressing approval is when one makes a 'positive evaluation' (ibid.: 131) of the proposals discussed. Other strategies for ratifying decisions include summarising the progress of the discussion. Summarising the discussion gives the summariser a good deal of influence over what is overtly recognised as having been agreed or what is noted as important (Holmes and Marra, 2004). Endorsing attempts, on the other hand, is a ratification strategy that is performed by the leader when non-chair participants initiate an issue or ratify a decision. 'The chair would typically follow the utterance, as if endorsing it i.e. signalling that they agree with what has occurred' (Marra, 2003: 132). At times, this strategy is performed by the senior participants who are the experts on the issue discussed. On the other hand, Holmes and Stubbe (2003: 76) claim that ratification is usually required when non-chair participants make a unilateral declaration of the desired decision. In this case, the chair's or the leader's ratification is still required

before a proposal is advanced into a decision (Holmes and Marra, 2004; Marra, 2003; Clifton, 2012). Alongside this, with an ever-present right to veto, a leader, too, could 'overthrow any decision made by the team' (Marra, 2003: 125). Such an outcome can be seen when the formal leader does not consider the views of others and reinforces his/her view bluntly.

Apart from the formal leader, Marra (2003), in her study on DM, mentions that the chair is also accountable in DM processes. Since the processes are related to topic management, it is thus not surprising that moving from step to step in DM appears to be fundamentally the responsibility of the chair (Marra, 2003; Angouri and Marra, 2010). The tasks that are normally carried out by the chair (and are the chair's prerogative) include the speech acts of setting the agenda, opening and closings of meetings and raising issues. It is important to note that it is not necessarily the case that the leader constantly appears as the chair. In some organisations, the leaders are not obliged to carry out the tasks of the chair. The position of the chair is not exclusively assigned to those in the highest position in the team or in the larger institutional setting (see Holmes and Marra, 2004) and any member could be assigned with the task of chairing. In my dataset, the designated leader of the team is the chair for all the meetings that have been recorded, thus she is entitled to undertake the responsibilities of the formal leader and chair mentioned previously. Yet, owing to the fact that the study assumes the *a priori* relevance of the hierarchical superior as leader and expectations to do leadership, the study will also show that even in a case where there are formal hierarchical leaders in the team, the leadership roles in DM are distributed across all members and all members take the relevant roles that emerge on a turn-by-turn basis as decisions are made.

DM tasks are not static; they are constantly negotiated and shifted on a turn-by-turn basis among the members of various positions. My dataset, which will be shown in Chapter 6, shows that the ordinary members could also have the final say at times. The findings will demonstrate that certain speech acts that are the prerogative of the formal leaders and the chair can be skilfully enacted by the ordinary members. Because these behaviours are constitutive of the doing of leadership, the members

who perform these activities advance themselves to leadership roles – even if it is only momentarily.

DM and the ordinary members

Workplaces with a more egalitarian work ethic are likely to establish a more dynamic negotiation in the DM processes (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003; Koester, 2004; Handford, 2010). Handford (2010) claims that peer meetings are more likely to produce decisions rather than the meetings between managers and other members. Such situations permit ordinary members to lead the discussion, contribute considerably and at certain points, too, may eventually decide and arrive at the final decision. The chair plays a less active role and is far more supportive of the subordinates' viewpoints. Similarly, in teams whose leader is more liberal and *laissez faire*, these participants do not only contribute to DM but they also have the potential to perform leadership by demonstrating behaviours that are usually attributed to the formal leaders and the chair (Holmes, Schnurr and Marra, 2007).

The speech act of initiating a proposal, on the other hand, is accessible to individuals who may take the floor and for those who are held accountable for the agenda (Marra, 2003; Clifton, 2009). Choi and Schnurr (2014) observe the enactment of leadership in a leaderless team and discovered that different members take on the role of raising proposals at different points of interactions. In one of the instances, the solution is not only proposed by the members but also accepted and negotiated among themselves. Such an undertaking describes the practices of leadership in this team as being distributed, where every member takes on different roles at different phases of interaction. The findings support the claim that the speech act of proposal initiation could be initiated by all members.

Nonetheless, in order for one to enact leadership and exert influence over DM processes, s/he has to show competence and this is often done through displaying expertise. Potentially, any participant can construct themselves as 'influential experts and are thus in a stronger position to influence the decisions' (Kotthoff, 1997: 173). A decision that is made based on knowledge or experience by a person in a

more subordinate position is referred to as having 'expert power' (Marra, 2003: 172). Also known as epistemic status or rights (Landmark, Gulbrandsen and Svennevig, 2015), entitlement (Asmuß and Oshima, 2012: 69) or epistemic primacy (Hayano, 2011; Clifton, 2017), this speech act facilitates a speaker 'to be in a 'one-up' position [than] the addressee in terms of knowledge about or epistemic access to the referent' (Hayano, 2011: 60). In a study by Asmuß and Oshima (2012) on proposing a future action, the authors find that it is not necessarily the case that the CEO constantly appears as the more influential person over the activity of editing a document but that 'they negotiate each other's right to propose revisions and to accept or reject proposals' (ibid.: 71). The findings reveal that the CEO utilises direct statement to receive immediate acceptance of the proposal and to show his right to make a proposal and mark the proposal as acceptable or not. This activity, referred to as 'entitlement' is done when one has the right information or first-hand knowledge on the matter discussed. This speech act equates to leadership as it is 'implicitly establishing superior access, expertise, [personal experience], authority and rights to assess the matter in question...' (Heritage, 2002: 9; Clifton, 2012; 2017; Landmark et al., 2015). The one who claims epistemic primacy is the first person to make an assessment and 'establishes a context in which a second can be found to agree or disagree' (Heritage, ibid.).

One of the ways to claim epistemic primacy is through making proposals. Since proposal 'makes a specific next action relevant, namely that of accepting or rejecting the proposal', a person could claim entitlement by making proposal or assessing the practicality of the proposal (Asmuß and Oshima, 2012: 72). While claiming epistemic primacy, members negotiate each other's right to propose, accept or reject proposals. In Clifton (2017: 53), he finds that those who claim epistemic primacy and 'with rights to have and display knowledge that manage the meaning of what is going on and how best to address the situation' appear to have claimed an identity as the leader. Landmark et al. (2015) who investigate epistemic rights in medical treatment in shared DM between the patients and the physicians find that the negotiations of epistemic authority counteract the ideal shared DM. This is due to the patients' resistance to claim epistemic primacy and the shift of responsibility to make

decisions to those who are more knowledgeable, i.e. the physicians. These studies illustrate that experts' roles do not remain stable at all times but rather they are temporary and negotiated across members throughout DM processes (Kotthoff, 1997).

Apart from epistemic primacy, the speech act that is available for all members to exhibit leadership is deontic authority. While epistemic primacy is concerning knowledge, deontic authority concerns 'rights and obligations', i.e. 'something that must be regarded as separate from the epistemic dimension but yet as interrelated with it' (Stevanovic and Peräkylä, 2012: 298). 'Deontic authority is about getting the world to match the words' and 'determining how the word 'ought to be'' (ibid.: 298). In simpler words, someone who claims deontic authority attempts to determine others' future action, 'what is obligatory, permissible or forbidden' (ibid.: 299). Nevertheless, claims are not necessary to be complied with but they could either be resisted or challenged. Similar to epistemic primacy, the claims for deontic authority are distributed across the group members and, depending on contextual factors, deontic authority is claimed with respect to one's area/domain of expertise or hierarchical position. In Zinken and Ogiermann (2011) study on deontic modals, such as can, may and could in family conversation, the authors demonstrate how this speech strategy is oriented to require the addressee to carry out the directives posed to them. In Stevanovic and Peräkylä's (2012) study on the deontic authority of the responsive actions in DM in planning meetings, the authors investigate two types of responses, i.e. deontic congruence (agree) and deontic incongruence (resist) used by the participants. The first category observes positive responses towards the claims on deontic authority and they include information receipt, compliance, approval and decision announcement. The latter category, on the other hand, is responded through 'mock information receipt and approval' (ibid.: 315) which degrades the claim of deontic authority by the first speaker. Deontic incongruence also observes the decision announcement as a way to resist claims of deontic authority. In this case, the second speaker (i.e. the one who resists) claims greater deontic authority than the first. Although the authors do not specifically link these speech acts with leadership, it is relatively notable that these acts could be some of the ways for

members of discussions to display authority and exert influence over decisions. The person(s) who manage to claim this speech act successfully exhibit a certain degree of authority and control. Preda and Stan (2016) who look into leadership styles discuss the upside and downside of leadership deontic authority, and one of the upsides includes 'decision-making autonomy'. Pomeratz and Denvir (2007: 47) in their study on the roles of the chair in meetings, claim that the participants who 'fully voice their perspectives and persuade other participants of their views' would pose difficulties for the chair to enact the chairing role in more authoritative ways. From these claims, we could deduce that ordinary members who appear decisive in their proposals and define what should be done, challenge the role of the chair, and thus assume the role of leadership. The studies reviewed above verify that there is an implicit relationship between deontic authority and leadership, and this relationship is a product of the complex interactional dynamics that occur in DM between legitimate leaders and meeting participants.

Parallel to this, DM processes become more fascinating when examining how leadership boundaries between authorities and those in more subordinate positions are maintained, co-constructed and/or resisted throughout the discussions. By examining the occupancy of various leadership roles and placing leadership as a fluid process, we can describe the dynamics that typify the team's ways of doing leadership through which several speech acts are performed. With this, the interest in investigating DM processes does not rely on the quantity or rationality of the decisions made (Henningesen and Henningesen, 2015), nor on identifying idealised phases of a DM episode (Priem, Harrison and Muir, 1995; Campbell and Whitehead, 2009). Instead, the analytical focus is rather on the discursive resources that enable the ordinary members to exert influence, develop a sense of entitlement over the decisions, and subsequently, do leadership. What this will also highlight is that DM is not necessarily the prerogative of the designated leaders but it is a form of collaborative work where, at times, the ordinary members enact leadership collectively with those in positions of authority.

A crucial issue arising from collaborative work by all members in leadership and DM, is the attribution of the ownership of a decision to the appropriate proposer(s).

Decisions are often collaboratively constructed in a sequence of turns due to the fact that the nature of the work has become more team-based (Huisman, 2001). In a fluid process such as DM, it is more challenging to recognise who owns the decisions when almost all members of the discussion play pertinent roles. Reiterating the findings from Clifton (2017) which demonstrate the sequences of DM talk that are collectively constructed by the members, the active involvement has caused difficulties for the analyst in determining the most influential speaker. Clifton makes it clear that identifying who is the most salient individual in the DM instances is a debatable issue as the identity of the 'leader' shifts in each turn and everybody could potentially emerge as a leader. He concludes in his study that the hierarchic superior successfully claimed her leader identity due to her evaluation of the topic discussed and her performance as the decision announcer. The one who announces the decision is assumed to have the final say and so successfully claim the leader's identity. Similarly, Angouri and Angelidou (2012) in their study on the small firm context, claim that the manager owns the final say for all the decisions made in the meetings. Despite that, the authors do not mention a link between the final say and claiming ownership on decisions. As I will indicate in Chapter 6, one of the examples from the WA dataset illustrates that a decision is implicitly ratified by an ordinary member, hence owning the decision. I acknowledge that such a circumstance is not prevalently occurring within the dataset; however, the fact that other members could indicate a ratification of the issue discussed appears to contradict previous studies. It is hoped that such a finding will elucidate the issue on decision ownership and contribute to the existing body of scholarship on leadership and DM.

This section reviews the leadership activities that are the prerogatives of the formal leaders and the leadership activities that other participants could take on during DM. Having discussed the studies on DM and leadership in face-to-face interaction, I now review the features of WA, and draw on empirical studies of digital workplace communication in the next section.

2.8 Virtual communication and e-leadership

This section reviews one of the most utilised virtual platforms in today's workplace, WA, and its unique features that influence workplace communication. Further, I review studies in applied linguistics on computer-mediated communication (henceforth CMC), such as emails and IM systems, and outline possible gaps that are potentially filled by this research.

2.8.1 WhatsApp (WA)

WA is an instant messaging app that operates across most smartphones and tablets via a connection to the Internet. Its speed in transmitting messages has enormously facilitated the way people communicate with each other (Sutling et al., 2015). WA is claimed to be the 'most well-run instant messaging service available, and handles more instant messages in a day than the entire global short messaging system industry' (ibid.: 225). Church and Oliveira (2013) discovered that WA is the preferred app for sending text messages due to a range of factors including cost, community, privacy, reliability, and simplicity. Despite the growing number of mobile messaging services, such as Viber, Line, KakaoTalk, Snapchat, WeChat and Tango around the globe, WA continues to be the most popular app on the list. This is confirmed by a statistic that proves that WA is ranked as the most popular global mobile messenger app, with more than 1300 million monthly active users worldwide as of January 2018. What is more interesting is that Malaysia is ranked as the second most popular country that utilises the mobile messaging app worldwide after Saudi Arabia, with a 68% adoption rate during the third quarter of 2017¹. The figures show that WA is an increasingly popular messaging app in Malaysia. Hence, it is not surprising that this social media software is one of the most used tools for communication in many workplaces in Malaysia.

The strengths of this technology are evident in several recent academic studies of WA. Researchers found that WA is used as a tool for sharing knowledge amongst colleagues (Johnston et al., 2014; Abdullah, Mohd Tahir and Mohd Said 2014; Daud,

¹ Based on The Statistics Portal (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/291540/mobile-internet-user-whatsapp/>)

2014; Haque, Ahlan and Mohamed Razi, 2015), sharing data between professionals and clients (Petruzzi and De Benedittis, 2016), and as a tool for learning facilitation between teachers and students (Bouhnik and Deshen, 2014). All of these services reflect the effects of changing technology on communication, in which technology has become the 'core medium of communication in many social communities' (Sánchez-Moya and Cruz-Maya, 2015: 52).

Today, WA is not only accessible through mobile phones but it can also be used as a web browser, where one can send and receive WA messages from one's computer. Known as WhatsApp Web, the use of WA on the computer desktop has made the messaging experience more convenient by eliminating the need to recheck one's phone while working on a computer. With its widespread uptake, it is believed that the use of WA in the workplace allows staff to interact at a faster rate compared to using email. Users can communicate in groups where multiple users can participate and monitor the conversations (Johnston et al., 2014). Through WA, information and feedback can be exchanged immediately, and the management of tasks can be achieved swiftly (ibid.). In Johnston et al.'s study that evaluates the use of WA in emergency surgical teams (2014: 2), it was found that WA represents a 'disruptive innovation' in healthcare communication. The use of WA is regarded as 'appropriate with the nature of the team's emergency workload that involves the rapid assessment, management and discharge of patients' (ibid.: 3). As well as allowing users to send personal messages to others, WA makes it possible for them to create groups where they can communicate interactively through photos, videos, audio messages, links, contacts and location-sharing, free of charge.

It is important to note that online communication tools such as WA do not only enable real-time chat, but they can also 'preserve a record of the interaction that can be accessed later' (Herring and Androutsopoulos, 2015). In other words, users can access messages that they have missed previously and reply to them at their convenience.

Due to the fact that WA is gaining popularity in the way that people communicate, this study aims to collect the WA messages exchanged among the investigated team

committee. The team under scrutiny has its own online group on WA that it regularly uses to interact, discuss issues, gain prompt feedback and even make decisions for issues relating to the tasks they are working on. Figure 2.3 briefly outlines an example of an interface taken from Google to describe the main features of WA that may contribute to its popularity amongst the users of mobile app. Because I did not contribute to the WA group (I was simply a passive observer), an image of the team's group would not display the full functions of WA, such as the 'blue ticks' function that only appears when one sends their own message. As such, I have sourced an example from Google to illustrate the interface.

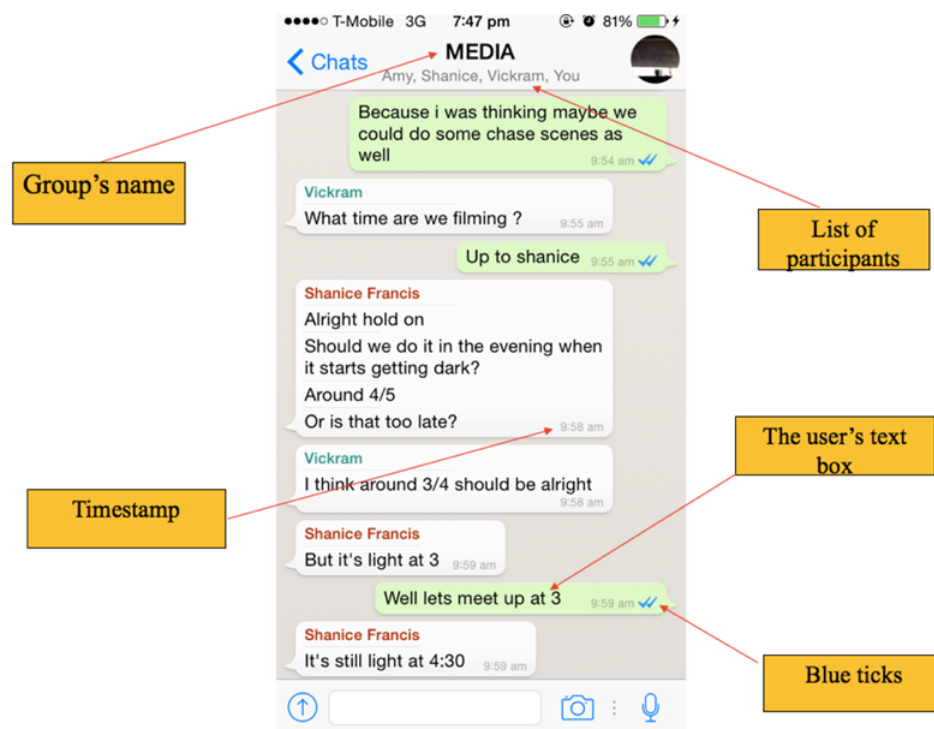


Figure 2.3 An example of an interface of a WA group on iPhone, taken from the Google image

In describing the features of WA, I will start from the left-hand side before moving on to the features listed on the right-hand side of the figure.

WA allows users to chat with up to 256 people at once (<https://faq.whatsapp.com/en/iphone/23782517>). Conveniently, WA allows its

users to gather in a group according to the group's interest, add favourable members, and chat liberally within and beyond their topics of interests. The shared interest is usually reflected through the title of the group. At the top of Figure 2.3, the title 'MEDIA' indicates the group's name. The name is presumably chosen because of the team's interest in media or the team's collective tasks in relation to media. The participants are also able to change the group icon that matches the group's interests. The group can choose any image that they prefer, although some images may not reflect the group's objectives at all.

The second feature of a WA group is the list of participants, as shown in the first box on the right-hand side of Figure 2.3. A list of the first four participants can be found immediately below the group's name. The names of the participants are arranged in alphabetical order.

The text boxes in the group have different colours for the users to differentiate their own messages from those of other participants. One's own text box is in green, while the message boxes of other participants are in grey. The names of the participants are stated above their text boxes to indicate ownership, and each of the names is indicated with distinctive colours.

Another unique feature of WA is the timestamp. The timestamp indicates the time of messages being sent to the group, received and read by the group members. Some people find time stamps very useful for keeping abreast of the latest updates from friends and colleagues and at the same time, reinforcing a sense of immediacy for feedback from the receivers (Darics, 2016). In forensic analysis, the timestamp plays an important role by providing information in many investigations, such as the real time that messages were sent (Anglano, 2014). In sociolinguistic studies, it has been found that the timestamp can be used to challenge and pressurise the receiver of the message. Darics (2016) gives an example of a customer's public complaints on the Twitter platform. Hoping for a prompt reply, the delayed reaction to the complaint caused the customer to post another message to let people know that he was neglected. The posts (also known as tweets) showing the time stamps of the actual time the messages were posted act as evidence that the complaints were not

acknowledged and thus, indicate the ignorance of the company in dealing with the customer's complaints. Darics (ibid.: 48) notes that 'the need to get a message right the first time puts a lot of pressure on people'. In another study on e-leadership, Darics (2017: 17) shows that 'utterance chunking which means breaking up single utterances into several shorter components and sending them successively, rather than as a whole' may imply one's authority of control of time. Sending messages continuously within a very brief duration shows the authority of a person of a higher status because they are holding the floor for longer. These two studies reveal interesting insights into the use of time stamps that frequently go unnoticed, and yet play crucial roles in exposing underlying messages conveyed through the cues.

The final feature of a WA group that is worth mentioning is the double blue ticks. With these ticks, the participants are informed that the message has been read by the recipients. In a WA group, the double blue ticks act as a read receipt or 'seen-notification' (Mai et al., 2015: 301), that indicate that the messages have been seen and/or read by all members. If any of them has not seen and/or read the message, the tick will appear as a single or double tick in grey. The single grey tick means that the message is successfully sent, while the double grey ticks mean that the message is successfully delivered to all recipients but not everybody has seen and/or read the message. This feature provides more transparency over the course of an interaction. Other online social media sites and messenger tools that are equipped with this function are Facebook Messenger, Instagram Direct, and Viber. By default, this function is optional and it could be set to private, where one could decide to disable read receipts so the other recipients would not be able to know that s/he has seen and/or read the message. In return, the individual is unable to see read receipts from other people too. In general, observing the read receipt or blue ticks serves as a kind of 'social monitoring' (Mai et al., 2015: 298). Mai et al. (ibid.) notes:

...checking whether a chat partner has seen a message, is an attempt to monitor one's inclusionary status (Leary, Tambor, Terdal, and Downs, 1995, pp. 519–520). Delayed or all-together omitted answers may indicate rejection or exclusion...

The quote above highlights the relevance of acknowledging that the blue ticks feature of one's participation, hence shows that non-verbal cues serve a range of interactional functions during the construction of meaning in an interaction.

2.8.2 Empirical research on digital communication at work

In many workplaces today, organisations have begun to incorporate online communication as part of their daily workplace communication tool. The interactions in online communication provide rich information to observe how interaction and workplace relations are negotiated, maintained and enhanced in written messages. For instance, Habil and Rafik-Galea (2008) analyse the ways that language is used in the opening sequences of internal emails. The authors discovered that the interrogatives are utilised to request for action while imperatives are used to request for action. On the other hand, declaratives serve multiple purposes as an interactional function, such as making promises, showing expectation, expressing gratitude, seeking apology and emphasising points made previously. In a similar context to online communication, Yeoh (2014) studies email communication and analyses the internal emails of three workplaces of different cultures. A comparison is made between the workplaces, based on the accomplishment of relational work, power and the negotiation of status-based workplace relationships in emails. Imperatives, mitigation and boosting devices, personal pronouns and time intensifiers are analysed to examine how power and authority are constructed in formal greetings.

In another approach towards analysing interaction in a digital environment, Darics (2013, 2015a, 2015b, 2016, 2017) focuses on non-verbal cues in investigating the interactional functions used in IM systems. In her 2013 article, Darics investigates letter repetition, accounting for their meanings and functions in mediated discourse. The cues are labelled as signalling emotion and providing auditory information, and conveying informality and collegiality in the case where the interaction involved unequal participation. In another article, Darics (2015b) discusses the divide between synchronous and asynchronous genres that apparently have important consequences for language production. IM and email can be both a synchronous and

an asynchronous genre of communication, where one can respond to the messages either instantly or at a later time. 'Pauses, silence or delays can be seen as communication problems and can result in serious consequences for task-based co-operation' (ibid.: 202). The second feature that Darics discusses is the persistence of the transcript. In emails, the persistence of the transcript is observed as a new interactional behaviour, while in IM, this feature shows informality as the conversation is not opened and closed with proper openings and closings, such as face-to-face interactions. However, it is not widely decided whether 'the lack of conventionality contributes to the effectiveness of interactional partners' (ibid.: 203).

In a more recent article, Darics (2017: 1) draws our attention to the fact that 'doing leadership in a virtual realm is becoming part of many leader's daily work'. Observing e-leadership from a linguistic perspective, Darics explores leadership work ranging from transactional to more relationally-oriented tasks undertaken by the leaders. A range of non-verbal communication practices used by the e-leaders are analysed. The cues that help the leaders to reinforce solidarity with the other members include lack of capitalisation, vocal spelling, ellipsis, non-lexical tokens, laughter and emoticons (graphic designs that are similar to emoji²). For transactional-oriented tasks, the leaders utilise strategies such as non-lexical items (i.e. erm) and ellipsis to mitigate directives and maintain solidarity with the other members. Capitalisation, high typing speed and utterance chunking, on the other hand, are used to reinforce the hierarchical position. With the complexities and various functions of non-verbal communication cues in digital communication, such analysis serves as one of the steps to contribute to the current theorisation and practical implications of leadership research and how it fits and reflects the use of communication tools in many organisations today. Darics notes that her research does not take into account the contextual and ethnographic factors that might have affected the use of non-verbal cues. She further claims that consideration of these factors warrants attention to clarify meanings and intentions of the usage of the non-verbal cues.

² Emoji are 'small digital images or icons used to express and idea of emotion' (Baxter, 2018: 9).

In line with the recent trends in workplace discourse research, this thesis sets out to contribute to this gap by focusing on DL practices and micro-level strategies in DM utilised by the participants in a WA group. It is important to note that I am not specifically focusing on the micro-level strategies of non-verbal cues (i.e. orthography and typography) but I will generally draw attention to notable non-verbal cues and contextual information to disambiguate or clarify the functions of the cues. The findings from the WA interaction will also be contrasted with data from face-to-face meetings to discover the discrepancies and similarities of DM and DL leadership practices of a team, in two different contexts.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter established the background of leadership studies and illuminated DM as a prime site for doing leadership (Castor, 2005; Marra et al., 2006; Baxter, 2014). In the first section of the chapter, I reviewed the leadership traditions of discursive psychology and discursive leadership, the empirical research on leadership discourse, and drew attention to contemporary constellations of leadership and discussed the criticisms of post-heroic leadership. The previous studies also highlighted several leadership activities in DM that are the prerogative of the hierarchic superiors and other strategies that could be taken by the ordinary members. These reviews offer several strategies for doing leadership and leave much to be explored on the topic. The current study aims to unfold the different strategies of leadership among both formal leaders and ordinary members, and to explore the DL practice within the team.

In the second main section, I described the conceptual issues of decisions and DM and have raised several questions worth considering to better contribute to the conceptualisation of these two aspects. In reviewing the baseline models of decisions and complex decisions by Marra (2003), I have altered some aspects of the models to best fit my findings (see Chapter 4). Responding to Huisman (2001: 76) call, the study aspires to illustrate the DM processes both in meetings and WA, and show how these contexts present the practice of intertextuality, ongoing work and DM

interactions across contexts. The issue of DM and leadership will be addressed in Chapter 5.

The third area of research relevant to the current study is work that has been done on workplace interaction in a digital environment. I introduced some of the empirical studies that have explored the ways language was used in emails and IM systems. These studies, specifically Darics (2013, 2014, 2017), also provided the basis for seeing non-verbal cues as resources for e-leaders to perform leadership strategically in contexts where audio and visual information were lacking.

In the ensuing chapter, I will demonstrate the methods and methodologies adapted for the current research. The chapter begins with a description of the research approach in which the research is positioned and the theoretical framework underpinning this study. The chapter closes with a summary of the dataset collected.

3.1 Introduction

The chapter begins by outlining the research paradigm and the research approach in which this study is positioned, and the theoretical frameworks underpinning it. Following this, I explain the ethical issues, the data collection methods and challenges during the data collection and data analysis processes. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the transcription and translation, and a summary of the dataset.

With respect to the research design, I adopt a qualitative approach method. A qualitative approach provides the means to seek a deeper understanding and to explore the nuances of experiences and rigorous analysis that are not available through quantitative approaches (Darlaston-Jones, 2007). As my research questions revolve around 'how' rather than 'how many', a qualitative approach has enabled me to expand on the 'how' questions. The aim of the approach is to understand 'the world through the eyes of the participants' (Wilson, 1998: 3) by 'presenting their voices in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study' (Creswell, 2013: 44). Aligned with the principle of qualitative research, I aim to demonstrate a complex picture of the concept of leadership and move away from being tightly bounded by the cause-and-effect relationships among factors. With data including recordings of meetings, a collection of WA messages, interviews and non-participant observation, this research provides multiple sources of information in order to provide a detailed in-depth understanding of leadership and DM. Given the exploratory nature of the work, I consider the qualitative approach appropriate for the study. The following section describes the research paradigm that provides the foundation for this study and explains the justification for my choice.

3.2 Research paradigm

'[A] paradigm is a basic set of beliefs, a set of assumptions we are willing to make, which serve as touchstones in guiding our activities' (Guba and Lincoln, 1989: 80). A

research paradigm is, therefore, the beliefs that represent the positions we take in our research. Research paradigms include philosophical approaches of the nature of reality (ontology), the nature and grounds of knowledge (epistemology) and the process of research (methodology) (Creswell, 2013). The chosen research paradigm informs the purposes of research, how information is sought to answer the research questions, the nature of the dataset, the position of the researcher in relation to the participants and data, the methods of investigation, how data are analysed, the rules for arriving at such conclusions, and how findings can be applied (Benton and Craib, 2001; Creswell, 2013).

My ontological and epistemological positions are social constructionist. As opposed to a relativist ontological position, which states that reality is objective, a social constructionist believes the 'reality' is intangible, socially constructed through interactions; produced and made through discourses. This paradigm subscribes to the importance of context, time, space and constructors in a given situation, thus leading to the conclusion that the nature of knowledge is diverse and subjective.

Discourse analysis is one of methodologies that embodies a 'strong' social constructivist view of the social world (Phillips and Hardy, 2002: 5). In describing the analysis, the researchers rely on the participants' interactions with others, the historical and cultural norms that operate in a given context, and the researchers' experience or background knowledge of what they find. Not only that, discourse analytic approaches 'share constructive effects of language, reflexive, and incorporate interpretive style of analysis where they involve a set of assumptions concerning the constructive effects of language' (ibid.: 5). Simply put, discourse analysis takes presuppositions about meanings that underlie the interaction and considers the local and contextual knowledge that underlies the interpretation. These philosophical assumptions may ring true in my study. My data analysis very much depends on the interactions of the participants, my background knowledge and my experience in the field, and is strengthened by data collected from the interviews and non-participant observation.

A social constructionist perspective and discourse analysis are valid for the study due to two motivations. I am investigating leadership discourse and DM that acknowledge there is no single reality about leadership. Leadership constructs multiple realities and, depending on the context in which it occurs, the realities are constructed and influenced by various contextual factors. What occurs in a DM process in one context differs from another, and what counts as leadership discourse in one setting is different from leadership discourse in another. Following this logic, DM processes and leadership discourse are not governed by any particular set of characteristics. Secondly, the use of an IS framework adopted for this study supports the view that 'constructivist researchers often address the processes of interaction among individuals, [and] focus on the specific contexts in which people live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants' (Creswell, 2013: 25). This research focuses on actual interactions by concentrating on a specific team in specific contexts and identifies the features of processes and discourse that are influenced by different contextual factors. Thus, it is best to employ a discourse-based approach in examining how social activities such as leadership and DM are managed, and to allow the data to emerge without imposing prescriptive ways on how leadership and DM should be led or constructed.

With regard to the in-depth analysis of the extracts, I utilised IS and CofP as the theoretical frameworks (see Section 3.2.2) that guides the analysis. This is described in the next section.

3.2.1 Theoretical framework: Interactional sociolinguistics (IS)

The major theoretical approaches to discourse analysis include critical discourse analysis, variationist sociolinguistics, CA and IS. The analysis of leadership discourse in the present study primarily draws on the analytical concepts of IS, and CofP (see Section 3.2.2) in analysing leadership discourse at a micro-linguistic level.

IS is a well-established theoretical framework used in the field of sociolinguistics that focuses on communicative practices where societal and interactive forces merge (Gumperz, 2003; Vine et al., 2008). This approach to discourse analysis was

pioneered by Gumperz and later improved upon by Goffman. Sociolinguists who adopt this framework analyse discourse through conversational inferencing and contextualisation cues that relate to how speakers signal and interpret meaning in social interactions (Gumperz, 2003; Bailey, 2015). The main aim is to discover how social meaning is negotiated in interactions by relating it to the analysts' knowledge and making presuppositions on the specific community and background assumptions that underlie the negotiation of interpretation (Gumperz, 2003; Vine et al., 2008; Holmes, 2014). This interpretation is often based on extensive ethnographic observations, interviews and analysis of audio- or video-recorded interactions.

IS assumes that interpretive assessments build on local or context-specific background knowledge that takes the form of presuppositions that shift in the course of an encounter (Gumperz, 2003). Analysis focuses on conversational inference, defined as the interpretive procedure by means of which interactants assess what is communicatively intended at any point in an exchange, and on which they rely to plan and produce their responses (ibid.). Gumperz (1982) indicates that sequential positioning of turns is significant to conversational inference and any other prior factors, too. Background knowledge is gained through previous interactions and the speakers' and listeners' communicative background. On the other hand, contextualisation cues refer to any feature of linguistic form that contributes to the signalling of contextual presuppositions. These features range across dialect and style switching processes, lexical and syntactic options, prosody, and formulaic expressions, to name a few (ibid.). What this means in practice is that both contextual information and the use of fine-grained analytic tools contribute to understanding and interpreting how meaning is negotiated between participants in interaction (Holmes et al., 2011). Apart from exploring how language works, IS provides insights into the social processes through which individuals build and maintain relationships, exercise power, project and negotiate identities, and create communities (Gordon, 2011). This view is particularly significant as it brings a critical dimension to the analysis of workplace interaction (Holmes et al., 2011).

The use of IS has proved valuable in studies that explore the ways in which specific identity or strategies are constructed, such as gender, ethnicity and leadership. In

leadership discourse, for instance, IS enables analysts to examine what 'leadership looks and sounds like' (Baxter, 2014: 427) and how these are interpreted in the given context. Apart from demonstrating these discursive practices at the micro-level of interaction, IS provides insights into the larger processes through which leadership is enacted. Such processes include the activities of reinforcing solidarity and maintaining relationships, exercising and challenging authority, and constructing and negotiating leaders' identities. In practice, the speech acts include features such as 'turn-taking and content, pronoun use, discourse markers, pauses, hesitations' to name but a few (Vine et al., 2008: 345). This approach thus encompasses most aspects in interaction (Holmes, 2014).

Amongst the sociolinguists that utilise IS in analysing leadership discourse are Holmes et al. (2011). Analysing workplace leadership at work, leadership is analysed through narrative, such as anecdotes and sharing of experience and assessments. In one of the examples (ibid.: 49), the authors claim that the repeated use of the personal pronoun 'I' conveys masculine narratives of contest in which the leader constructs himself as visionary, despite formidable hurdles. In another instance, the authors demonstrate how the leader's use of a series of laudatory lexical items, such as 'topnotch', 'blow him away' and 'impressive', helped him to construct a positive and authoritative leadership identity. In her study, Schnurr (2009a) discovers different teasing styles that are particularly valuable tools for leaders to achieve various leadership objectives. For instance, teasing humour 'assist the leaders to get things done, criticise subordinates and reinforce solidarity' (ibid.: 63). Her findings have added on to the different methods of how leadership can be successfully executed, proving that the often ignored linguistic resource of humour is meaningful in achieving leadership. Baxter (2015), on the other hand, uses an IS framework to examine the linguistic construction of leadership according to the gender composition of the teams. The use of IS provides synchronous snapshots of the discursive strategies of leadership. For instance, the participants found that linguistic practices such as being 'solicitous of each other's opinions, egalitarian, free-for-all, and highly vocal' are helpful for enacting a collaborative leadership. Meanwhile the 'most persuasive or dominant voice[s]' do not serve the team in achieving a

successful business outcome (ibid.: 446). Other sociolinguistic researchers that have widely utilised the IS framework in their leadership studies include Vine et al. (2008), Schnurr and Zayts (2017) and Wilson (2017) to name a few. These researchers have shown the various ways in which leadership is enacted in diverse workplaces and team settings with different strategies being used to conduct successful leadership.

The use of IS has also been widely used to analyse the interactions that occur in a digital environment. With the means of contextualisation and linguistic cues, IS can also be used to analyse paralinguistic and multimodal aspects that can reflect the 'social identities and relationships such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity, status and class' (Baxter, 2018: 11). Nevertheless, the examination of contextualisation cues in this environment could be problematic. Darics (2015: 249) points out that the contextualisation cues may be 'decontextualize[d], i.e. that they do not have referential meaning... [but depend] greatly on the wider and closer context as well as on the interactants'. In countering this shortcoming, analysts who take this discursive approach examine the interaction and observe the responses received on each utterance simultaneously (Darics, 2015). 'This immersive textual analysis allows researchers to identify the cues that might have a role in the contextualization of the messages as well as their effects on the interpretative process' (ibid.: 250).

The following are several recent studies that utilise IS as a means of examining online interactions. The first is by Angouri and Sanderson (2014) on the functions of a rheumatoid arthritis forum and the emergence of roles in the team's interactions. The authors utilise IS and the thematic analysis methodology in reporting their ethnographically informed analysis. While the authors do not specifically focus on the visual signals in digital writing, their analysis is akin to the analysis of spoken or face-to-face interactions. For instance, rather than analysing the specific means of orthography and typography, the authors highlight the verbal modes of interactions such as the 'you are not alone' messages and the collective pronouns of 'we', 'us' or 'you', to name but a few. Such a form of analysis is efficient since the data derived from the online forum bear a strong resemblance to spoken interactions. Darics (2015a) utilises the IS approach to analyse IM messages. Offering an analytical framework of 'DEANEX', this approach draws on the analysis of IS and CA in exposing

the contextualisation cues and their meaning within IM data. Darics analyses the use of ellipses and capital letters of IM interactions and exposes their possible meanings and roles in the interaction. Ellipses such as continuous full stops indicate refusal, hesitation or signalling the floor holding, meanwhile the use of the caps lock may demonstrate one's emotion or dominance. Baxter (2018), in her study on the construction of solidarity in a cancer support WA group, combines the semi-ethnographic methods with IS for her multimodal resources analysis. She demonstrates the analysis of diverse resources such as humour and 'biographical work (recasting one's life history and subsequent identity)' and participants' diverse use of supplementary resources, such as photographs of themselves, website links to information, video clips of songs, and emoticons, to enable support to the members.

The studies reviewed above show that IS is able to provide rich and detailed information by means of contextualisation, linguistic features, paralinguistic cues and semiotic resources present in spoken and digital interaction. It is thus an appropriate framework to analyse leadership, 'a relational process involving the formal leaders and those they work with, that is predicated on asymmetrical power relations' (Vine et al., 2008: 345). For the purpose of this study, I will be considering the ways in which participants take in charge in DM, such as allocating speakers, initiating issues, delivering proposals and ratifying decisions. In the analysis that follows (Chapters 4-6), I acknowledge these activities along with the social and contextual relationships that influence the enactment of DL in DM.

3.2.2 Theoretical framework: Community of Practice (CofP)

In order to understand the ways in which the DL practices are influenced, constituted and shaped by the discursive norms that characterise the participants' working practices, my study will utilise a second framework: the CofP. The CofP is beneficial to offer insights into the impact of workplace practices on DL and DM styles of the investigated team. In conjunction with an IS framework, the CofP approach facilitates in determining various DL practices and DM styles on a micro- level, by focussing on how decisions and DM are reached and participated in this team. Simultaneously,

these insights provide valuable observation into leadership discourse in the workplace on a macro-level.

The concept of CofP is developed by Lave and Wenger (1991) as one of the components in social learning theory. The concept is expanded by Wenger (1998) who uses it to study the relationship between participation and reification. He claims that CofPs are developed when individuals become active participants in social communities through engagement in actions and interactions where members develop more meaningful ties and identify strongly with each other in their shared practices.

A CofP, as concisely defined by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992: 464), is illustrated in the following:

[A CofP is] a group of people who are engaged mutually in a common endeavor; and through such mutual engagement, common practices such as 'ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, power relations—in short, practices' emerge.

A key notion of CofP is practice. Eckert and Wenger (2005: 583) define practice as '... a way of doing things, as grounded in and shared by a community. Team's objectives and interactional styles are co-determined by the community members and allow for constant changes and group development. A CofP does not remain as a community by itself. In order to build shared understanding of the domain and approaches to the practice, regular and continuous interactions among the members are crucial. During the interactional process, they build a sense of common history, identity, negotiated linguistic repertoire and valuable relationships based on respect and trust (Wenger et al., 2002), and it is these discourse practices in which the sociolinguists are interested.

3.2.3 Dimensions of CofP

A CofP comprises three dimensions (Wenger, 1998: 73):

1. mutual engagement
2. joint enterprise

3. shared repertoire

According to Wenger (1998: 73), membership in a CofP is 'a matter of mutual engagement'. This 'mutual engagement' is the first characteristic of a CofP. Mutual engagements are activities that require regular interactions, be they casual, intensive or comprehensive (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 1999). In an organisation, activities include attending meetings, communicating via email or on the phone, participating in small talk, solving problems and discussing projects' and can be part of what makes mutual engagement possible' (Wenger, 1998: 74). Through active participation, individuals will feel included, as though they belong to a particular group, since 'such interactions sustain relations of mutual engagement and connect them meaningfully with other members' (Wenger et al., 1998: 74).

The second characteristic of a CofP is the presence of negotiations of joint enterprise. It 'involves the complex relationships of mutual accountability that become part of the practice of the community' (Wenger, 1998: 80). 'Although not everybody necessarily believes in the same thing or agrees with everything, the enterprise is joint because it is communally negotiated' (ibid.: 78). In simpler terms, Holmes and Meyerhoff (1999: 175) refer to joint enterprise as 'a process' where negotiations and their contributions are built towards the larger enterprise. Therefore, a joint enterprise does not entail agreement among the group members at all times, but disagreement is also viewed as a productive aspect of an enterprise. When negotiating a joint enterprise, mutual accountability emerges among the members.

The third characteristic of a CofP is the existence of a shared repertoire. It is this aspect that sociolinguists focus on. It is the observable behaviour that signifies the membership and/or identities of a CofP. The shared repertoire of CofPs can be formed around 'routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, discourse, specialised jargons, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice' (Wenger, 1998: 83). The linguistic aspects of repertoire such as 'discourse, vocabularies, stories and specialised jargon help create identities' (ibid.: 83) in diverse CofPs. This provides rich insights for sociolinguists to identify a

CofP's interactional styles (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 1999). There are numerous examples of shared repertoires in business meetings such as 'acronyms for the structure of departments and divisions, positions within the company and product names, participants' nicknames and preferred pattern[s] of conducting business meeting[s]' (Mullany, 2006: 23).

One of the defining characteristics of a CofP is a common reference system, or jargon. The investigated team, the TEFL committee is no exception to this. According to Wenger (1998), a newcomer needs to be familiar with the jargon in order to associate well with the members of a CofP. In the TEFL committee, one striking acronym used within their meetings is 'SOP'. SOP refers to the School Orientation Programme, a programme that aims to provide early exposure of the school environment to trainee teachers. As a new member of the team, Eusof appeared confused and was unable to participate actively when he was prompted for an opinion on the suitable date to conduct the SOP. His participation was constrained due to his unfamiliarity with the team's (and department's) in-house jargon.

In the present study, the joint enterprise that will be investigated is the DM activities and DM processes, both in face-to-face meetings and in the WA group. It is in these contexts that the team constantly interacts and engages in ongoing talk and action, and continually modifies the CofP behaviour in regular discussions in meetings. The distinctive CofP workplace behaviour and particular ways of undertaking leadership are developed. On the other hand, shared repertoire also includes the diverse DM processes that the group typically engage to negotiate, challenge and reach decisions that subsequently shape and are shaped by norms developed among members of the CofP.

A notable characteristic of the team is that, despite the fact that the team is hierarchically constructed, leadership practices appeared to be distributed among members. In Chapters 5 and 6, we will observe the shared repertoires and leadership behaviours within this team that are perceived to be acceptable within the CofP. These discursive practices have allowed the TEFL members to enact, negotiate and challenge the status and responsibilities between the senior and junior members.

Such practices bring to the fore the dynamic interplay of the microlinguistic activities and the contextual factors.

3.2.4 CofP and sociolinguistics research

The CofP framework is widely used by those interested in exploring the relationship between language and society, and how norms and shared practices are negotiated in alignment with one's community and mutual engagement (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 1999). Amongst the studies that utilise this approach for this purpose is that of Schnurr and Chan (2011). Their study investigates the response strategies to teasing and self-denigrating humour by subordinates in asymmetrical power relations in the workplace, and the findings indicate that the interactional norms that characterise the CofP impact on the responding strategies. For instance, it is acceptable for subordinates to respond to teasing posed by the superiors with self-denigrating humour in a particular situation, such as in the presence of a potential new employee. Such behaviour reflects the normative conduct of the members that also characterises the CofP's response strategies. Mullany (2004) finds that norms and conventions of politeness in different CofPs influence the superiors' way of giving directives. In one of the CofPs, unmitigated directives that are directed to subordinates are perceived as acceptable by the subordinates. In another study in online forums, Angouri and Tseliga (2010: 57) investigate 'impoliteness strategies employed by the interactants that indicate different judgements of what constitutes marked behaviour'. Their findings conclude that the identities of the participants (age, core/periphery member), the relationship between participants and the topics of conversations play crucial roles in determining how interactions are managed and perceived acceptable by the participants within the community

The studies reviewed above show how norms and shared practices are developed over time and these practices are negotiated in alignment with one's community joint enterprises and mutual engagement. With the emphasis given on linking the micro-level and macro-level of analyses, we could conclude that the CofP concept offers an effective analytical framework to '[encourage] a focus on social diversity, while simultaneously facilitating the perception of subtle yet meaningful patterns'

(Holmes and Meyerhoff, 1999: 181). The micro-level analysis is aligned with the foundation of social constructionist method, in which 'detailed ethnographic analysis of discourse in context [is required] to identify significant or representative social interactions, to characterize the processes of negotiating shared goals and to describe the practices that identify the CofP' (ibid.: 181). In addition, by looking at behaviours within the CofP, the insights would enable us to identify 'the points at which participants appear to be enacting the distinctive norms of a specific group' (Holmes et al., 2011: 8), which in this case is leadership behaviours. Meanwhile, the macro-level analysis allows the findings to describe and inform the investigated phenomena in a wider context on how leadership is enacted and co-constructed within a team with different positions and responsibilities. This thesis adopts a predominantly micro-level and macro-level for a more dynamic approach to leadership that would reflect the understanding of the various factors that lead to the enactment of leadership by the formal leaders and the ordinary members.

A variety of data were collected to in investigating how DM and leadership practices are constructed in this context. The following section describes the data collection processes and the problems that I have encountered throughout the processes.

3.3 Pilot study

The methodology design for the current research was developed based on the work that I had carried out for my Master's degree on the functions of humour in workplace settings (Mohd Omar, 2013). As such, my Master's research acted as a pilot study in respect of the methodology adopted for the present study. Even though my past research was used as a pilot study, there are remarkable distinctions between that and the current research. Firstly, the current research is more in-depth, as it focuses on the case study of one specific working committee. Secondly, this current research involves interviews with the participants.

The lessons learnt from the pilot study guided me towards a more effective way to approach and gain methodologically sound data. For instance, I learned that the use of high quality equipment such as video cameras and audio recorders is important in

researching natural conversations. In the past, I utilised several types of recording equipment that could not capture long conversations, and so the quality of the data I had was poor. Realising their importance to my research, I used two video cameras and an iPhone 5 as an audio device for the present study.

Several trial interviews were conducted prior to holding the actual interviews with the participants. These interviews were done in two parts; the first phase of the pilot interviews was conducted with three PhD colleagues, while the second phase was conducted with four academic members, who were similar to my target group. The first phase of pilot testing was conducted at Warwick University, while the second phase of the interviews was conducted at the location of the investigated setting. The purposes of the pilot interviews were to test the interview questions, to check whether any of them were vague and to familiarise myself with the methodology for conducting interviews.

I learned the following, closely related lessons from the interview practices:

1. Maintaining eye contact is an important aspect in conducting effective interviews. By recording the interview sessions, I was 'freed from taking notes and was also able to maintain eye contact with each interviewee' (Yeoh, 2014: 55), hence engaged with the participants.
2. It is important to keep the interviewer from excessively deviating from the topic being discussed in order to save time.
3. I should be familiar with, or, better yet, memorise the organisation of some of the questions so that the interview appears more natural and to avoid any awkwardness from having to repeatedly look at my questions. Also, by memorising some of the questions, I could fully concentrate on the addressee's responses, and not worry too much about the next questions that needed to be asked.
4. The flexibility of semi-structured interviews allows me to relate to the interviewees' previous experiences or conflicts that they may have faced while working in the team.

5. It is always helpful to establish a rapport with the participants before the beginning of an interview. This is to ensure that the interviewee feels at ease and is comfortable enough to elaborate detailed responses during the interviews.

3.4 Ethics and consent

In December 2015, the consent forms and information sheets designed for this study were reviewed and formally approved by the Centre for Applied Linguistics' ethics committee. Both forms explicitly addressed the fundamental information on research, issues of confidentiality, and the option of withdrawal at any point of the research without placing the participants at risk. It was also made clear that any records of withdrawal would be kept confidential, and all data relating to the withdrawn participants would be deleted permanently (see Appendix 2 and 3).

Certain ethical issues also needed to be addressed. Full anonymity had to be granted to protect privacy and identities, as ethical issues could occur when disclosing information during analysis. 'Because qualitative inquirers often spend considerable time at research sites, they may lose track of the need to present multiple perspectives and a complex picture of the central phenomenon' (Creswell, 2013: 60). In light of this issue, participants' names and identities, research contexts, names of the courses and/or programmes and tasks jargon are protected through masking their names.

3.5 Position of the researcher

Having worked in the investigated setting for three years before I began my PhD studies, I consider myself privy to a considerable amount of information that could be useful in carrying out my research. Such information includes knowledge of the layout of the office, the general practices of meetings and job scopes assigned to the workers. In addition, I also have the advantage of being able to understand and make sense of the jargon used and the 'inside jokes' (Norrick, 1993: 6) made in the interactions. Being an insider of the investigated setting provides me with the benefit of making 'explicit the systems of understanding because [I am] able to use [myself]

as [a] source of information and interpretation' (Saville-Troike, 2003: 89). Also, this status has provided me with the emic perspectives on the workplace and allowed me to interpret and clarify the interactions with fundamental assumptions of the workplace practices. It has also helped me in gaining access to the data, although the process of getting through to the gatekeeper was initially laborious.

As a colleague to most of the participants, I had earned their trust through working closely with them on previous tasks. Out of the six participants involved in the study, I am only close to one of them – with the others, our relationship is more professional. During the fieldwork, I played very minor roles in their workplace tasks. I helped them set up food tables during a briefing with school supervisors and bought them coffee while they were having a meeting (Meeting 4, henceforth M4). I only participated in meeting discussions when my responses were required and took part in small talk before and after the meetings. Yeoh (2014) establishes trust with her participants through participating in office-related tasks, while Wilson (2011) takes part in team activities such as carrying training equipment and filling water bottles in his attempt to become a peripheral member³ of the CofP of rugby teams.

It is worth noting, however, that at the time of data collection, it had been ten months since I had left the workplace, and I had not regularly contacted the participants since then. Consequently, I had just a limited understanding of some of their current communicative practices that may have changed over time. This could be illustrated through the use of an unfamiliar nickname to refer to a colleague after she had earned her doctoral degree. I consider it a notable change, since all the staff in the setting had been addressing her with the nickname. In addition to this, the context had undergone several changes since I had left. During the time of my research, it was headed by a new Dean of a different faculty, and the management team had been reformed with new members. The board members of the management team were made up of faculty members. Due to these changes, the

³ Peripheral members are members who exhibit linguistic repertoire of the CofP that they belong to. Over time, these members could be described as a core member upon developing the core practices of the CofP (Wilson, 2017).

norms of interaction in the wider context may have altered or developed several new linguistic repertoires.

The period of ten months away from the setting gave me a considerable degree of unfamiliarity with the setting. Holmes et al. (2011: 23) indicate that a researcher needs to be reflexive in order not to impose inappropriate or normative judgements in the process of interpreting what is going on. Analysts should be open to alternative interpretations and perspectives, and should also identify the many factors involved in a situation. I have used data triangulation and literature reviews to not only support my data analysis but also to question and reflect critically on the analysis. I have also gained feedback from academic presentations and discussions, and have had constant consultations with my supervisors to help me in gaining an insider's and outsiders' views on the context. These discussions have also helped me achieve a degree of objectivity, reduce any bias regarding the behaviours of the participants that I may have held and provide multiple perspectives for data reporting.

3.6 Research procedures

Several methods were used in the process of data collection, including the use of audio-video recordings of meetings, non-participant observer, interviews and the collection of WA messages. Whilst all data were collected concurrently between October 2015 and early February 2016, the WA messages are an exception. The WA messages were collected from October 2015 to the end of February 2016. I have divided the procedures of data collection into five phases, as shown in Figure 3.1.

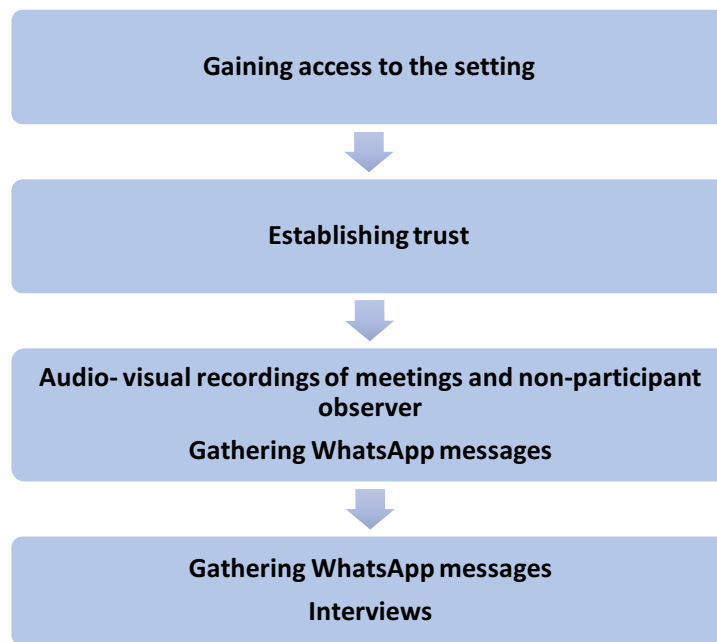


Figure 3.1 Data Collection Procedures

Figure 3.1 demonstrates the process of data collection in the order that it was carried out. There are two boxes containing more than one method, and this indicates that they were executed simultaneously. Utilising a multi-method approach has provided me with corroborative data that supports and strengthens the analysis of leadership discourse. Each procedure listed in the figure is described in more detail below.

3.6.1 Gaining access to the setting

The first step of initiating the data collection was obtaining permission from the Dean of the setting. This was done virtually. In July 2015, two emails were sent to the Dean seeking permission to conduct the study at the setting under scrutiny. In the email, I briefly described the purpose of the data collection and the processes involved. I also mentioned that the analysis on leadership discourse in the investigated team would be made available and circulated to those participants interested in reviewing their interactional styles. This was done to maintain reciprocity and the ongoing trust that we had established as well as to show that I appreciated the effort and time that they put in and their willingness to be a part of the study.

Like other researchers who have obtained natural data for their research (Ebrahim, 2013; Yeoh, 2014), I faced several difficulties in gaining access to the research field. After waiting two weeks for a reply, I resent the email to the Dean, and, at the same time, forwarded it to his secretary, informing her about the current study and the concerns that I had. Nonetheless, I did not hear anything in response to the email sent to the secretary and so I decided to send emails to two other members in the management team, namely the Deputy Dean and the HOD of the potential division. Thankfully, the HOD responded to the email with positive feedback. Through the email exchanges, I also informed her about the start date of the data collection and requested a meeting with her to talk about the process. An official permission letter was then received from the main gatekeeper of the setting (i.e. the Dean) after waiting for almost a month. The letter was sent by email through his secretary. Following that, I was given the green light to begin the project and to approach the potential participants through any means accessible to them.

On the whole, there was not much of a negotiation process involved to gain access to the data. Although the reply to my request to carry out the research came later than I had anticipated, it did not affect the process of data collection. It is also noteworthy to point out that being a member of the investigated setting did not guarantee quick or immediate access to the setting.

3.6.2 Establishing trust

Even though I had secured formal permission from the gatekeepers, access still remained a concern. Before the commencement of my fieldwork, I had met with the HOD to discuss issues related to confidentiality in order to develop trust, and sought her help in obtaining details on the investigated team. She kindly gave suggestions on possible working teams that could become potential participants of the study, and the TEFL committee⁴ was included in the list.

As I was uncertain about the participants for the study, I approached several leaders of the potential working committees through WA messages before emailing them

⁴ The TEFL committee is a pseudonym to refer to the team researched in this study.

the consent forms. I also approached the assigned leader of the TEFL committee after the HOD recommended them as one of the potential teams that could participate in the research. Before contacting her through WA, I made several calls to see her at her office, but we were unable to meet due to miscommunication of information. Thus, I texted her on WA and explained to her my intention to investigate one of the committee teams that she was currently leading. I also highlighted the benefits of the research, offering her my analysis on the team's interactional styles as a way to maintain a reciprocal relationship between us. My request was openly accepted, and she was happy to cooperate throughout the period of data collection.

As I needed an immediate response from the remaining members to obtain their consent for the first recording, I opted to contact them through WA. I was unable to seek their consent in person as they had other work commitments. The WA messages that were sent to them were followed by emails and they were welcome to clarify any concerns that they might have had. However, I did not receive any response or questions regarding the research, other than a reply from one of them who indicated his willingness to participate.

Thus, I prepared photocopied consent forms and information sheets to be distributed to the participants after the first meeting. At the end of the meeting, concerns were raised and the debriefing session helped me establish trust with the participants. In a study by Pang (2014), consent forms were made available to participants, but were not utilised to indicate the participants' agreement. She claimed that her participants viewed consent forms as unnecessary, and that they had indicated their agreement without using written documents. To maintain a good rapport with them, Pang mentioned that she did not ask them further about consent letters, as she had already gained their trust. Such an approach, which promotes leniency in ethics in data collection, makes the participants feel more at ease when it comes to indicating their participation in the research. Seeking consent for the subsequent meetings was not perceived as necessary, since this research would involve investigating and working with a specific committee only.

3.6.3 Audio-visual recording of meetings

Meeting interactions are the primary sources for this research. The basic principle of the methodological orientation for this study was to gain authentic speech that is as natural as possible. To ensure this, the primary data of this research were collected through video and audio recordings to capture real-time meeting interactions. 'Cameras have the power to keep a record of temporal and kinesic features hence allowing us to focus on what is sometimes a very small detail at the time, such as a particular sound or a person's small gesture' (Duranti, 1997: 116). This, according to Sarangi (2010: 398), is also known as the 'semiotic modes of representation'. Even though the current study does not focus on any specific paralinguistic features, the minute details of the interactions have helped me by providing a more accurate view on how they do DM. The use of recording devices has proved to be vital in analysing workplace interactions, as extensively demonstrated by the LWP team. Other studies that utilised the same methods in researching workplace communication include Mullany (2007), Schnurr (2009a), Angouri and Marra (2010), Svennevig (2011), Wodak et al. (2011), Baxter (2014), and Clifton (2017) to name a few.

The meetings were filmed with two cameras placed diagonally in two corners of the meeting room. Meanwhile, an audio recorder was placed on the table positioned close to the participants' seats. For video recording purposes, I utilised the Sony Handycam HDR-CX405 and the JVC Everio GZ-MG 360 BUS. An iPhone 5S was used to capture the voices of all the participants, and acted as a backup storage device for the videos that I recorded. Because the meeting room was arranged according to a board-style layout, with an oval conference table set-up, utilising multiple devices was important so that all faces could be captured. Figure 3.2 demonstrates the participants' seating arrangement, as well as the placement of the recording devices.

I decided to prepare the recording equipment before the participants arrived and removed them after they had left the room. By doing this, my involvement during the recording sessions was minimised and less disruptive. Although these measures may have disrupted their attention during the beginning of the first meeting, as Irene humorously pointed out in her comment: 'We need to put on make-up as we will be

recorded (laughs)', the participants soon disregarded the presence of the equipment as the interactions went on naturally. As a non-participant observer of the meetings, it seemed to me that the participants were not distracted by the recording instruments as they behaved normally. To further illustrate their comfort with the situation, the participants included me in their interactions in Meeting 1 (henceforth M1) by asking about my experience in teaching a particular subject. Meanwhile in another meeting (M4), some of the participants made humorous comments about local words and sensitive issues, and jokingly stated that I should address them in my thesis. The fact that the participants maintained naturalness in their interactions indicates that they were well informed about the researcher and the devices, yet were comfortable with my presence.

The chairperson's seating arrangement differed from one meeting to the next. In M1, the assigned leader, who is also the chair for all meetings recorded, sat next to the HOD on a seat accorded to normal members, as depicted in Figure 3.2. During the rest of the recorded meetings, however, the chair sat at the head of Table 2. As the formal leader of the team, this seating position was most appropriate for her.

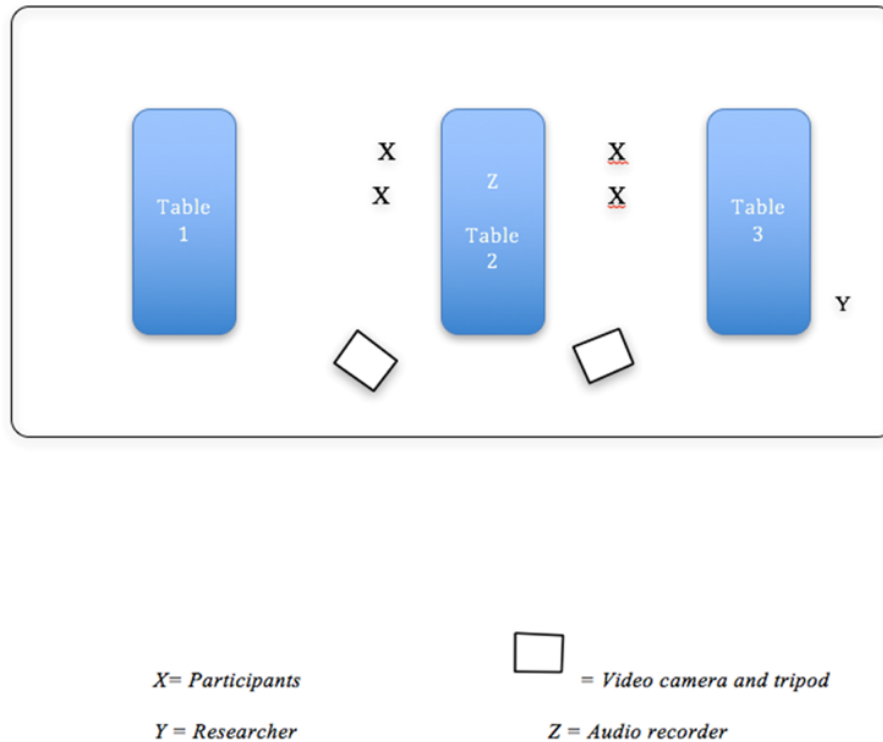


Figure 3.2 The participants' seating arrangement and the placement of the devices during the first meeting (M1)

Throughout the four weeks of fieldwork, I recorded four meetings. Meeting 2 (henceforth M2), was recorded with the help of one of the participants since I had a conference to attend in Kuala Lumpur. I had set up the recording devices two days before the actual meeting was held, and I explained to her the procedures for handling the devices. On the day of the meeting, only one out of the two video recorders managed to capture the whole discussion. One camera only recorded 17 minutes of the meeting, as it was not put on charge mode. This situation can be used as an example of why Handford (2010) believes the researcher's presence is important. 'In the absence of the researcher, the participants might not turn the equipment on until a meeting had formally started, thereby missing any crucial pre-meeting discourse, or they might forget to turn the tape over...' (ibid.: 6). In my case, it was such a relief that the other two pieces of equipment, a video camera and an audio recorder, had successfully recorded the whole session. From this incident, I

learned that the researcher is a key instrument that needs to be at the research site to make sure that the data are properly secured during the process of data collection.

However, the crucial roles that the participants played in accelerating the recording processes should also be acknowledged. In M4, two participants helped me carry out the recording. The meeting was initially scheduled for 3.00 pm but was held earlier at 2.30 pm as decided by the leader in the WA group. I was not aware of this change, so I came into the meeting room at 2.55 pm. Since the recording equipment had been set up earlier, two participants had turned the devices on before the meeting started (see Section 3.6.5 for another instance of a participant who helped out to secure my WA data).

These two situations prove that rapport and trust are essential when it comes to conducting qualitative research such as this. The rapport and ongoing trust that I had built with my participants eased the process of data collection whenever I faced limitations.

3.6.4 Gathering WA messages

Apart from meetings, the WA messages are the primary sources of data for this research. The methodological design in gathering WA messages is parallel with the participatory method utilised by Holmes et al. (2011) in face-to-face meetings data. My participants were given complete control over the messages, and the power to either allow or restrict the use of those messages in the study.

To gain access to the WA messages, I asked for the leader's permission to let me in. Not long after that, I was included in the group. My role in the group was as a passive observer and I did not participate in their group chat. With the 'blue ticks' feature, WA provides delivery notifications, which show when a message is sent, delivered and read by the recipients. Due to this feature, I decided to read new messages a few hours after interactions occurred to lessen the participants' awareness of being observed. Doing this may also reduce the observer's paradox within this platform. After collecting a considerable number of messages from October 2015 to late February 2016, I was removed from the group by the formal leader. A main reason

for this, was that I had gathered enough data and wanted the WA messages to be consistent with the meetings dataset. By the term consistent, I referred to the durations of data gathering for both datasets went hand in hand.

The chat conversations were kept secure in several different virtual stores, such as in my Gmail and Warwick University email accounts. I would email the chat conversations to these accounts after the group had exchanged a considerable number of text messages. There was an instance when my WA app crashed before I had transferred the latest group conversation to my email accounts. To solve this problem, I asked one of the participants to help retrieve the conversation history and email it to me. After this incident, I made sure I always transferred the chat history to my virtual storage whenever new interactions (both short and long) appeared in the WA group.

In presenting the WA data, I have chosen to demonstrate it in a similar form to the meetings data. This means that only WA messages will be demonstrated in the analysis chapters and no screengrabs of the WA chat interface will be presented in the study. Since I have utilised the participants' real names in identifying them on my WA app, I thus need to maintain the utmost confidentiality of subject data by limiting the access to the WA chat interface. In addition, the screengrabs make picture files smaller thus limiting the space for illustrating the translated version of the interaction. This subsequently would only make the presentation of WA interaction unsystematic and messy.

3.6.5 Non-participant observation

A hallmark of a good qualitative study is the presentation of an in-depth understanding of the case through multiple forms of data. Apart from recordings of meetings and collecting WA messages, I played a passive role as an observant participant in M1, Meeting 3 (henceforth M3) and M4, and only responded in the discussions when I was asked for my opinion. I was also present to monitor the equipment as well as take note of important events. In M1, I was seated at the end of the third table and only participated when I was asked about my past experience

in teaching a particular subject (see Figure 3.2). In the subsequent meetings (M3 and M4), I sat at Table 1 and only joined in the laughter when the participants cracked a joke about peculiar local words that were to be inserted into my thesis. My seating position was not relatively noticeable or disruptive. This claim could be instantiated in M3, in which Syahira commented that she did not notice my presence, even though I was sitting behind her the whole time.

This instance illustrates that 'observer's paradox' is relatively absent in this context. As indicated by Labov (1972 as cited in Handford, 2010: 5), the 'observer's paradox' does not only occur during the recording of participants, but also during observation. The presence of a researcher doing observation work may constrain the production of language being researched (ibid.) and thus, the participants may 'act up' their interactional styles. However, I did not notice any alteration to their interactional styles. They appeared to be in a relaxed condition. I agree with Mullany (2007) and Handford (2010), who claim that researchers' presence becomes irrelevant with respect to the task at hand as participants in meetings are often occupied with institutional tasks.

In informal settings, such as during small talk, my participation was more active, yet minimal compared to my involvement in the meetings. Occasionally, I observed and socialised minimally with the participants and joined in with their conversations whenever it was appropriate, but without influencing the course of events. It would be fair to say that I had played a passive non-participant observer's role rather than a participatory role, as my contributions to the small talk that occurred before, during and after recordings were insignificant.

3.6.6 Semi-structured interviews

In addition to recorded meetings and a collection of WA messages, I collected data through semi-structured interviews. Interviews are very effective in obtaining participant experiences as they provide rich and detailed data for interpretation in the analysis. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 1), qualitative interviews attempt to 'understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the

meaning of their experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations'. The aforementioned approach was adopted in my interviews in order to verify my interpretations of the primary data, and gather information on the team as a CofP.

I conducted semi-structured interviews during the final stage of my fieldwork, during which I also asked questions to verify several observations that I had made during the data collection. The interviews, which provided supplementary data to support my analysis, gave me access to the participants' general working practices and allowed me to gain insights into the dynamics of the team in terms of their relationships with other members, their uses of the WA group, and their general views on leadership. This information was a crucial part of understanding the team's working practices, giving evidence of the ways in which they engage in DM processes and do leadership. For instance, the different uses of the WA group, such as the phenomenon of lurking, could not be entirely explained purely by observing communication in the group. In this case, the interviews facilitated an all-round perspective, informing the analysis and acting as tool for follow-up and a cross-checking method for the primary data, i.e. recordings of meetings and WA messages. Mann (2016) used a similar approach. His main data was primarily observations of meetings, while interviews provided an additional perspective in the analysis of the meetings (see Section 3.8.5 on how I use the interview data).

All the participants were invited to partake in interviews during the debriefing session. Of the six participants, only four agreed to be interviewed. However, during the final month of my data collection process, a fifth participant also agreed to an interview. This participant changed her mind about participating in an interview after I had developed a close rapport with her through interactions during and outside the meetings. For instance, on one occasion I accompanied her and another participant on a site visit and I took the opportunity to ask her informally about her views on the WA group. Several days later, I returned to her and asked if she would agree to be interviewed for the research, to which she accepted. In relation to this situation, I strongly agree with Yeoh (2014), who asserts that establishing rapport with participants is important before conducting interviews with them.

The participants were happy to be recorded, and the interviews were conducted at a time and place of their choosing. At times, we were not able to adhere to the initial interview slot due to their busy schedules and other work-related commitments. The total time spent interviewing all participants was approximately 5 hours and 45 minutes. All participants shared their responses with me openly and at length, and this caused the interviews to exceed the time limit that we had initially agreed upon. All interviews were conducted in the language that the interviewees were most comfortable using. Specifically, instances of code-switching and code-mixing occurred frequently in the participants' discourses, i.e. between colloquial Malaysian English and the dialects used in the states they came from.

The interview questions included the usual conduct of meetings, relationships with the other members and general perspectives on leadership. Some of these questions were used to make the participants feel at ease (see Appendix 4). By asking them to talk about topics they were familiar with, I was able to establish their roles within the team and gain ethnographic information on the team and the WA practices, as well as their views on leadership.

3.7 Introduction to the workplace

The chosen setting for my research is a higher education (henceforth HE) institution situated in Malaysia. In this thesis, for confidentiality purposes, the HE will go by the name of TOP. The settings involved have the following pseudonyms: the wider institutional context involved is called TOP university, the faculty involved is labelled NAS, the department involved is referred to as FAN, and the working team that is the main focus in the study is named the TEFL committee. The relationship between these groups is illustrated in Figure 3.3. My decision to focus on data collected in FAN is for practical reasons and accessibility to the data.

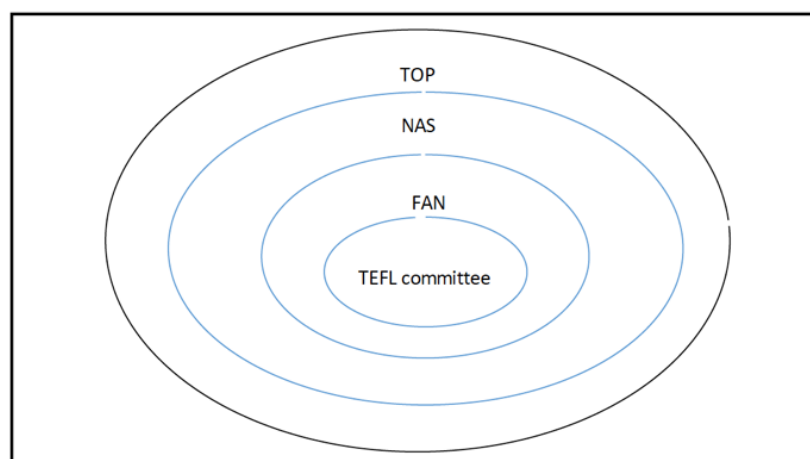


Figure 3.3 The wider and specific settings of the study

3.7.1 Introduction to the team

The TEFL team is one of the inter-departmental committees within FAN. The team comprises six participants that include the formal team leader, Sarah, and the team members, Zana, Syahira, Irene, Eusof and Wani⁵. The team's task is to manage all academic matters of a particular group of students, namely the TEFL students. Their main responsibilities include managing the students' teaching placement programme (henceforth TP) and revising the TEFL course for prospective and current students' use. These tasks are crucial, as they further the objectives of the department. As the appointed leader, Sarah has assigned the former task to Irene and Eusof, while Syahira works with her on the latter task. Nonetheless, the group still works as a committee in which the discussions and decisions are made collectively. Most of the times, the execution of these tasks, however, is the responsibility of the person in charge of them.

All members have been working in FAN for more than five years. However, Eusof is the most recent member who joined the department and the committee in July 2015. With the exception of Eusof, all the members have held many positions at the management and departmental level. These positions include HOD, Deputy Dean,

⁵ All names have been changed to pseudonyms.

Quality Assurance Coordinator and heads of several committees. Table 3.1 summarises the details of the members.

No.	Participant	Position in the TEFL Committee	Position in FAN	Working experience at TOP
1	Sarah	Formal leader and chair	Academic staff	Since 2010
2	Zana	Advisor	Head of Department	Since 1993
3	Eusof	Member	Academic staff	Since 2015
4	Syahira	Member	Senior academic staff	Since 1986
5	Irene	Member	Academic staff	Since 2011
6	Wani	Member	Senior academic staff	Since 1992

Table 3.1 Summary of the details of the participants

The variety of roles and positions held by the participants is what makes the team unique. Their different experiences and areas of expertise contribute to the team's dynamics and accelerate the execution of some of the tasks assigned to them. To illustrate the positions of the participants, I have included Figure 3.4, which demonstrates the hierarchical structure of the team based on their institutional standings.

The formal hierarchy observed by the TEFL committee is vertical in nature. This is evidenced by the hierarchical structure of the committee that presumes a traditional top-down work practice. Sarah, as the officially appointed team leader and chair, is at the top of the hierarchy in this particular team, with the other participants positioned below her. It is indicated that the leadership responsibilities are concentrated on her as the formal leader who is responsible and accountable in practice for the team's performance.

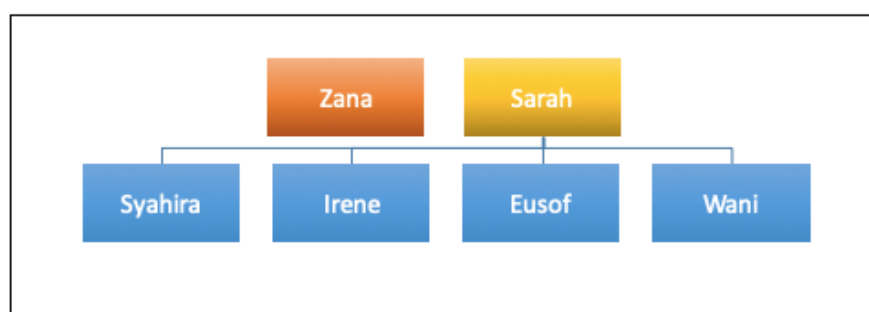


Figure 3.4 Organisational chart of the TEFL committee

What is interesting about the hierarchy is the fact that the participants hold various positions within the wider institution, i.e. at the departmental level. One of them is Zana. Being the HOD⁶, Zana holds the highest position among the members at FAN. As accorded by Irene during the interview, she acts as the advisor for the team. Both Sarah and Zana are senior members in NAS, but they differ in terms of years of experience. Zana has worked in the faculty for longer than Sarah, and so she is more experienced.

While other members acknowledge Zana as the advisor of the team who they report to before making further implementations of decisions, Eusof views Zana more as an authority figure in the team, presumably as in a higher position than Sarah. The different perceptions held by the members on Zana's standing in the team has placed her in a special position. In conceding to these differences, I placed Zana in a position that is different from the positions held by the other members of the team. She is not the leader of the team but is regarded as an advisor. As she is not the leader of the team, she cannot be placed above Sarah. Nonetheless, as a HOD, a subordinate position such as the one occupied by the rest of the team members is not suitable for her. Hence, to best illustrate her position, Zana is placed beside Sarah, and has

⁶ A month after the meeting recordings had ended, the position of HOD was filled by another colleague. Zana was replaced by another academic staff member so that she could focus on the final stage of her doctoral studies. However, she remained an ordinary member of the team.

the same authority over the team as Sarah. Figure 3.4 demonstrates the hierarchical structure based on the aspects mentioned.

Another characteristic of the team that I found fascinating is the position of the senior members, Zana, Syahira and Wani. In this team, these senior members are subordinate to a more junior member of staff, in this case Sarah. Such a situation is not unusual in FAN working committees. In previous practices, senior staff members were frequently placed under the leadership of junior staff members. Even Deans who have the highest institutional standing in the faculty have become members of teams that were headed by younger, junior colleagues.

Meetings are conducted depending on the tasks that need to be accomplished at a particular time and they are the prevalent type of assemblies in FAN. The objectives of the TEFL committee meetings are to plan work schedules, finalise results, make decisions on TP, and revise the TEFL subjects. In WA, on the other hand, the flexibility and informality of DM discussions could be seen through the interactions that occur at odd hours, including after working hours and late at night. However, when interviewed, none of the participants indicated that they were disturbed by this practice. In addition, the non-standard typographic and orthographic writing strategies, such as improper capitalisation, initialism, relaxed spelling and semiotic resources, i.e. emoji, represent the team's repertoire of friendliness and informality. The interactional patterns in the WA group seem to be contradictory to the characteristics of a formal business meeting where the discussion is typically structured. Darics (2017) has similar findings where her participants were found to be interacting using casual interactional strategies in IM systems, including during the time of leadership. This is rather unsurprising as many researchers have claimed that CMC has greatly reduced formality compared to that of face-to-face discussions (Dubrovsky, Kiesler and Sethna, 1991).

So, what do the participants' varying positions and informality at workplace tell us about leadership? The presence of these aspects within the team provides a fitting scene for the observation of different constellations of leadership such as DL. While the senior staff members may directly manage DM processes, junior members can

claim a leadership role through exhibiting their expertise on certain topics, formulating suggestions, manoeuvring discussions towards decisions and/or proposing future actions. The contextual factors such as the different positions and the fluidity of roles and activities provide an interesting setting to observe how tasks are distributed and DM activities are negotiated in their attempts to gain leadership.

In referring to Sarah and Zana throughout the study, I will refer to them as the formal, official or designated leaders of the team. By indicating their nominations as the leaders of the team, it is made clear that these participants are nominated and hold the title of 'leader' due to their positions in the organisation. By doing this, I attempt not to limit the label of 'leader' to hierarchical superiors only, but to acknowledge the fluidity of leadership moves that could be shared by several people in a group. As indicated in Chapter 2, leadership is not necessarily enacted by the appointed leaders but can be distributed and collectively performed by the ordinary members. Due to the fluid nature of the identities and/or roles of leader and follower, leadership is constantly constructed, negotiated and contested on a turn-by-turn basis. Given the definition of 'leader' as 'the person, or persons, who emerge ... [and make] salient contributions to the management of meaning' (Hosking, 1988: 153 as cited in Clifton, 2017: 63) and the complexity of the notions of leader and leadership, the terminology 'leader' in my view is rather broad. By explicitly indicating the term 'formal leader and designated' within the term 'leader', we avoid attributing the term 'leader' to specific individuals but acknowledge that the 'leader' identity is open for challenge by those who manage to influence the interaction, even if just momentarily. With this distinction, we are not only recognising the positions that some people have, based on their formal appointment, but simultaneously acknowledging the fluidity of leaders' identity and challenging the prevailing stereotypes that only hierarchical superiors are able to take on crucial roles in leadership. As pointed out by Schnurr (fc), 'the link between the notions of leadership and leader is not straightforward' and the term 'leader' is one of the aspects that contributes to this complexity. While the scope of the study is not focusing on the term 'leader', a wider discussion around the concept could be addressed by future research and discussed in detail to further clarify the term 'leader' in leadership.

Similarly, leadership research has also debated the use of the term ‘follower’, mentioning that the *a priori* use of ‘leader’ and ‘follower’ dismiss the fluidity of leadership roles that could be taken by members in subordinate positions. As I have mentioned in Chapter 1, the terminologies have been hotly debated most prevalently in organisational and management sciences. The term ‘follower’ is supposedly attributed to those who are unable to dissent and resist (Learmonth and Morrell, 2016), and who are denied their abilities for enacting and challenging the roles of the formal leaders. The authors (ibid.: 265) have in fact suggested different terms such as ‘dissenter’ or ‘radical’ for better terms to replace ‘followers’ who display dissent and resistance. While I am not intending to dig into the discussions on replacing the term ‘follower’ further, I agree with Collinson (2017) that by adopting the view of the followers not being able to resist and dissent would narrow our perceptions on leadership. I am aware that the term ‘follower’ is a relatively ideologically laden term and so I deliberately choose to use the term ‘ordinary team member’ to avoid contributing to the current tensions within the discussions. It may be argued that my chosen term still represents ‘different hierarchical groups’, yet the term ‘ordinary member’ is more reflexive in viewing the subordinates to be as competent as their leader in enacting leadership, rather than the term ‘followers’ that are argued to follow the lead of the formal leader.

3.8 Summary of dataset

The dataset for the present study consists of recordings of committee meetings, WA messages and interviews. In this section, I illustrate the dataset that I have collected during my five months of fieldwork, i.e. from October 2015 to February 2016.

3.8.1 Committee meetings and WA messages

Table 3.2 summarises the dataset of the recorded meetings. The data from all four meetings are based on the video recordings with a combined duration of 5 hours and 45 minutes. The main medium of instruction was primarily the local and neighbouring dialects, although code-switching in Malaysian English occurred

throughout the meetings. All meetings that were recorded were semi-formal in nature and were held in the meeting room.

The WA data amounted to 1664 posts comprising text messages with photos, images and emoji.

Meeting	Date	Duration of Meeting	No. of Participants
Meeting 1 (M1)	18/10/2015	104 minutes	4
Meeting 2 (M2)	16/11/2015	91 minutes	5
Meeting 3 (M3)	24/11/2015	59 minutes	4
Meeting 4 (M4)	24/1/2016	91 minutes	6
TOTAL		5 hours 45 minutes	

Table 3.2 Details of the Recorded Meetings

3.8.2 Transcribing data

The meeting data were transcribed verbatim using a computer software called NVivo 10. The transcribing features of NVivo helped me control audio speed, transcription rows and time stamps (see Appendix 5). However, since the data that I had were relatively large, I experienced hitches during the transcription process. The software was loaded with transcription rows and this slowed down the running of the software. To solve the problem, I created two transcripts for each meeting. The first part of the transcribing process was done with NVivo while the rest of the process was done manually.

Producing transcriptions that are accurate and readable is another challenge that transcribers must face. It is not a straightforward task as it involves judgement about what level of detail to choose (Bailey, 2015) and the transcribers 'rely on their own social evaluations of speech in deciding how to write it' (Roberts, 1997: 168). This

view is particularly relevant to my dataset, as it is heavily loaded with several Malaysian local dialects. There are considerable differences between local dialects and the standard Malay language. They do not only have different written non-standard variants, but also possess different prosodic features. For instance, representing the verbalisation 'dakpe' from the local dialect as 'tidak apa' in standard Malay language.

Taking into account accuracy and consistency as the main principles in transcribing data, I translated the dataset (meetings, interviews, WA messages) based on an emic perspective. I tried to keep the selected extracts as natural as possible, and conveyed the interactional styles of the participants as presented in the recordings. Such instances include particles like *lah*, *ha*, *deh* and *owk* (see Section 3.8.3). Cultural assumptions and my interpretation as an insider of the local community were also taken into consideration to best represent the interactions recorded (Roberts, 1997). Through this attempt, I hope to demonstrate the unique, authentic context that I am researching. The selected extracts that have been analysed were transcribed into detailed transcripts using transcription notation, namely CA, combining some aspects from the LWP conventions. Considering that I would be presenting some translation texts for my data, I selectively chose the symbols from these conventions that best represent my data and ensured that they were well formatted. This was done so that the transcripts are visually neat and pleasing as well as easy to follow.

3.8.3 Colloquial Malay *lah*, *deh*, *ha* and *owk*

My dataset is mainly in Malaysian English with prevalent occurrences of colloquial Malay. The frequent particles that occurred in the dataset are *lah*, *eh*, *ha*, *deh* and *owk*. These particles are addressed accordingly.

According to Goddard (1994), the particles *lah* (also spelled *la*) and *eh* are salient linguistic features in colloquial Malay and they carry several interactional jobs. Claimed to be 'notoriously difficult to pinpoint' (ibid.245), these particles function differently according to speech acts and contexts. For instance, when they are used with directives, the particles are used to soften the directives or requests; when they

are used with declaratives, they emphasise the statements; and when they are utilised in questions, they deemphasise status differences and demonstrate friendliness. Apart from context, the prosodic characteristics of the utterances influence the effect of the particles on the statement made. In contrast to being friendly and funny, *lah* and *eh* can be made to sound 'badgering, ill-tempered and impatient' when used with a harsh style of intonation or prolonged articulation (ibid.). *Ha*, on the other hand, is an exclamation (also spelled *ah*) and is used to express a range of emotions such as surprise, anger, disappointment or joy. Similar to *lah* and *eh*, the different prosodic characteristics of *ha* signal different functions based on the emotional state of the speaker.

The other two particles, *deh* and *owk*, are the linguistic devices that are commonly used by people in the east coast region of Malaysia. The function of *deh* is no different to the particle *lah*. It is not only used to strengthen a declarative but it can soften an imperative. Contingent on the emotions and intonation of the speaker, the particle could either demonstrate pleasantness or annoyance and displeasure. Meanwhile, *owk* is a tag question that has pragmatic functions like the tag ending 'right'. Hence, when it is used as a tag ending, the particle is uttered with falling or rising intonation, which then demonstrates the speaker's intention to seek confirmation, emphasise points or subtly persuade and influence the interlocutor.

3.8.4 Analysing meetings interaction and WA messages

During the initial phase, the data were analysed using the inductive methods of qualitative data analysis (Baxter, 2018). Once the meetings were transcribed verbatim, the recordings and transcripts of the meetings were reviewed thoroughly before they were coded into categories. Any significant moments within interactions were noted and selected.

As a novice researcher, selecting data for analysis was not an easy task as I was overwhelmed with data from the meetings and WA messages. After reading and listening to the transcripts numerous times, the meeting data were coded with relevant labels based on the recurrent patterns that occur in one or more of the

transcripts, and some of the important phenomena that are related or similar to the previous studies on DM (Marra, 2003; Clifton, 2012). For instance, several selected extracts were chosen based on the leadership activities enacted by the designated leaders, which include announcing and ratifying decisions. In respect to DM, I observed the instances of DM processes rather than focusing on particular occurrences of decisions. The DM instances were further categorised underlying the recurring patterns such as the types of decisions and the characteristics of the DM processes. Relevant examples from the transcripts were then extracted, transcribed in detail using the discourse transcription conventions of CA and LWP and analysed according to the IS and CofP frameworks.

The WA messages, on the other hand, did not have to be transcribed as the chat transcript could be exported and directly attached and emailed to the user's email address. In this case, I have emailed all chat histories to my personal and Warwick emails whenever new messages were sent in the group. The data were repeatedly read to allow the pattern of leadership practices to emerge naturally. As with the meeting data, the WA messages were manually coded according to leadership practices by the designated leaders and the ordinary members and DM characteristics determined in the meeting dataset, before they were analysed according to the principles of IS and CofP. The data analysis of these data is presented in the three analysis chapters (Chapters 4, 5 and 6).

3.8.5 Analysing interviews

The interviews were stored safely on my hard drive which was password protected and only accessible to me. The contents were further summarised in meaning units and their quotes were chosen based on their importance in supporting the analysis of the dataset from meetings and the WA messages. As mentioned previously, the interviews acted as supplementary data to strengthen the analysis, this dataset is important as it support the findings by providing the perspectives of the participants, describing the relationships of the participants and the practices of the CofP. This means that some relevant extracts, i.e. selected quotes from the participants' voice were used to further support my interpretations of the primary data.

The interviews were transcribed using NVivo and analysed using a deductive process, in an effort to confirm or negate the interpretations of the primary data from the meetings and the WA messages. This does not mean, however, that the analysis of the meeting and WA data relies solely on interpretations and explanations from the interviews, but rather the interviews allowed for elaboration and further comments that had not been noted in the analysis.

3.8.6 Translating data

Several issues were raised during the process of translating the recordings of the meetings. As mentioned earlier, most of the meetings were conducted in a combination of Malay language, Malaysian English and the local dialects. Specifically, instances of code-switching and code-mixing were the most concerning issues when translating the data.

It is important to note that translation is a limitation of the study. Some translated words may not indicate the exact meaning of the original word, and this may relatively affect the analysis by making the data less authentic. Nevertheless, I tried my best to find the equivalent words when translating by referring to several reputable Malay language online resources and repositories. The resources include the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, which is the government body for matters pertaining to the Malay language and the publisher of the prestigious dictionary of the Malay language. Apart from that, I have also referred the translated extracts to the proofreader of this thesis, who is a native speaker of the local dialect and a former member of staff at the investigated context, FAN. The extracts were also proofread by a native speaker of English to ensure that the translations are understandable to the readers.

In order to improve readability and convey the localised data in the best possible way, the selected extracts were translated with correct forms of grammar without affecting their authenticity. Words were also inserted to make the translation intelligible and capture meaning (Huisman, 2011).

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I described the research paradigm in which the current study is positioned, and discussed the rationale for using IS and CofP as the theoretical frameworks. Following that, I explained the methods of data collection and issues encountered during the data collection. I summarised the data collected for the study, explained the process of data analysis and addressed the issues with transcribing and translating the meetings and interviews. The following chapter presents the analysis of various processes in DM.

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to establish background knowledge on DM talk in the TEFL team. A DM continuum is proposed in order to demonstrate the categories of DM processes based on the features that emerge from the data. Being the prime site from which to observe leadership (Castor, 2005; Marra et al., 2006; Baxter, 2014), the DM processes in this data reflect a discursive phenomenon of leadership, with fluid boundaries between those in positions of authority and those in lower positions. Depending on the nature and complexity of the DM processes, this chapter shows that leadership is constructed in accordance with the features and characteristics of the DM processes, and vice versa. Utilising the meetings and WA dataset, this chapter investigates this observation in more detail and takes a closer look at the ways in which decisions are achieved at work in relation to norms that are developed in the TEFL team. The findings form the foundation for the subsequent analysis chapters on DM and leadership.

4.2 A continuum of DM Processes

One useful way of comparing the different degrees of DM processes is to place them along a continuum (see Figure 4.1). 'Traditionally, decisions have been grouped according to the method of decision making adopted by participants (i.e. decisions made by consensus, majority, voting, etc.)' (Marra, 2003: 152). Similarly, the DM categories in this thesis are grouped based on the ways decisions are arrived; the distinguishing categories of the DM processes from my dataset make use of four groups. The categories range from straightforward, relatively straightforward, complex to highly complex DM categories and as well as emerging from the dataset, they were referred to from past studies (Janis and Mann, 1977; Marra, 2003).

Straightforward processes refer to the simple structure of processes where decisions are achieved with little negotiation. This category is on the left hand side of the

continuum, while at the other end of the continuum are the highly complex decisions. Highly complex processes have the opposite characteristics. Decisions are reached within a longer period of time, involving repetitive stages and lengthier negotiations. Fairly straightforward and complex decision processes are positioned in the middle of the continuum as they combine elements of the processes nearest to their positions. By placing these types of DM processes in a continuum, it is assumed that characteristics of these processes are not exclusive and fixed to each category, but rather interrelated and non-discrete.

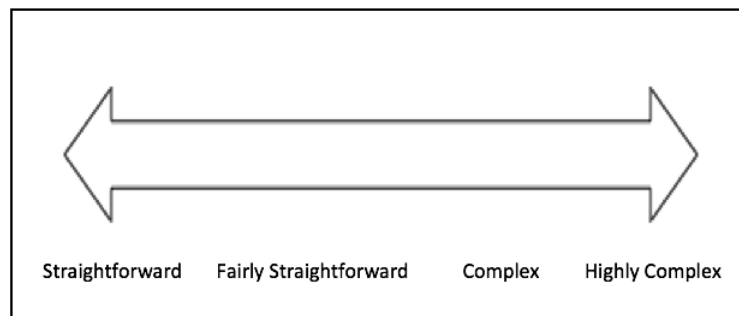


Figure 4.1 A continuum of DM processes

Marra's conception of DM styles provides useful similarities with the DM practices in my data. Based on the work of Sollit- Morris (1996), she categorises DM according to four broad styles that include 'decisions by authority', 'decisions by majority', 'decision by compromise' and 'decisions by consensus'. 'Decisions by authority' are decisions that are achieved with or without the consultation of the group. The rest of the categories, on the other hand, are decisions that are reached by agreement by members of the group. 'Decisions by authority' bear a resemblance to straightforward processes in my data. On the other hand, 'decisions by majority', 'decision by compromise' and 'decisions by consensus' are those that are mostly related to my collective DM processes, that include fairly straightforward, complex and highly complex.

In Table 4.1, I list the detailed characteristics and features of each of the categories, with reference to the literature (Janis and Mann, 1977; Marra, 2003; Svennevig, 2008). The proposed processes of DM, nonetheless, remain an open issue which future research in DM should clarify, confirm and test, in order to continue exploring the complexities of DM.

DM process Characteristics	Straightforward	Fairly straightforward	Complex	Highly complex
1. a) Length of turns b) Length taken to reach decisions	Meetings: Short and neat turn sequences WA: the issue is resolved within the same day, in a short timeframe.	Meetings: Slightly longer but still within neat turn sequences WA: the issue is resolved within the same day, with a slight delay (which is partly due to a delayed response time between posts)	Meetings: Scattered turns WA: the issue(s) take more than a day to be resolved (which is partly due to a delayed response time between posts)	Meetings: Scattered turns WA: the issue(s) take more than a day to be resolved (which is partly due to a delayed response time between posts)
2. Structure of DM process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linear • A single issue • One or more solutions are proposed • A ratification (Marra, 2003: 77). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linear • A single issue • One or more solutions are proposed • May or may not include implementation of proposal • A ratification (Marra, 2003: 77). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyclical / reversion (Janis and Mann, 1977) • Issue(s) is re-raised • More than one solution is proposed • More than one implementation of the proposal • A ratification (Marra, 2003: 77). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyclical / reversion (Janis and Mann, 1977) • Issue(s) is re-raised • More than one solution is proposed • More than one implementation of the proposal • A ratification (Marra 2003: 77).
3. Ratification	Meetings and WA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcement • Summary 	Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcement • Summary/ formulation of the gist of talk (Svennevig, 2008: 533) 	Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcement • Summary • Ratification may be absent or implicit 	Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcement • Summary • Ratification may be absent or implicit

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other complex non-verbal cues (i.e. note-taking, topic shift, acknowledgement token (i.e. Mhmm mhmm)) <p>WA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emoji Actual implementation of decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other complex non-verbal cues (i.e. note-taking, topic shift, acknowledgement token (i.e. Mhmm mhmm and significant silence (Marra, 2003: 108)), proposal of implementation <p>WA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emoji Actual implementation of decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other complex non-verbal cues (i.e. note-taking, topic shift, acknowledgement token (i.e. Mhmm mhmm and significant silence (Marra, 2003: 108)), proposal of implementation <p>WA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emoji Actual implementation of decision
4. Number of decisions	Single decision/ speedy decision (Marra, 2003: 153)	Single decision	More than one, including emergent decisions	More than one, including emergent decisions

Table 4.1 Summary of Characteristics of DM Processes

The features that characterise the processes include the length of turns, structure of DM processes, ratification, and number of decisions. In meetings, the length of turns is easily identifiable by looking at the turns taken in the interaction. Although there were people deviating from the ongoing topic of the discussion, the turns were still considered as part of the discussion. This is because participants would return to the topic in question after deviating from it. Due to the more dynamic nature of WA, turns may not be easily identifiable in these meetings. In WA, however, many discussions were left without responses, effectively halting the discussion. Some responses were delayed for several hours, or even days, meanwhile some issues did not receive any response from the participants. Therefore, in order to track the progress of DM in the WA group, I decided to look not only at the posts and but also the duration taken by the participants to respond to the issue. By looking at the posts, I distinguish between valid turns (that include relevant information about the topic under discussion) and invalid turns (that deviate from the topic). This approach is similar to looking at turns in meetings and I combine this aspect with a consideration of the participants' participation in giving responses. By doing this, I hope to explore the asynchronous and synchronous nature of WA and acknowledge the influence that these aspects have over the structure of DM.

The second characteristic that has emerged from the data is the overall structure of DM. In straightforward processes, I draw on the baseline model for decisions proposed by Marra (2003) containing three elements as a linear progression of the processes, namely issue, solution and decision ratification. The straightforward DM processes that occurred in my data observed this model, while other DM processes that are complex comprise longer sequences and cyclical progression from one phase to the next. I utilise the term 'reversion' of Janis and Mann (1977) in referring to the repetition of steps in complex DM processes. The spiral model of problem solving was first developed by Scheidel and Crowell (1964) to best represent the circular occurrence of problem solving phases in group discussion. The significance of this model is to replace the linear development and 'seeks a more detailed and truer description of the actual process of human reasoning in groups' (ibid.: 140). As illustrated in Chapter 2, my DM structure is adapted from Marra's (2003) model of

complex DM. The highly complex DM processes that occurred in my data include altering decisions that have previously been made, and this aspect is not addressed by Marra.

The third characteristic that I find significant in characterising the various processes of DM is decision ratification, i.e. 'the step which typically takes up ... last turns in a decision sequence' (Marra, 2003: 228). In straightforward processes, ratification usually takes the form of an announcement and summary. In more complex categories of DM, ratification is various. It includes a summary or formulation, note taking, implicit and explicit ratifying, topic shifts, acknowledgement tokens, proposals of implementation and significant silences (Marra, 2003). On the WA group, ratification is signalled through the use of emoji and actual implementation of a decision (Example 4.3). When an emoji is utilised as a ratification, the emoji that were typically used were the ones that signified relevant responses. For instance, the emoji of a 'thumbs up' hand sign that precedes a consensus may symbolically represent general satisfaction over the discussion (Danesi, 2017).

Finally, I distinguish between the categories of DM based on the number of decisions made in the processes. Straightforward and fairly straightforward processes produce a single decision. In Marra's (2003) DM model, such decisions typically occur as a 'decision by authority', and this category aligns with my straightforward DM processes where the decision is either made with or without consultation with the group members. The complex categories, on the other hand, produce more than one decision. These types of decisions include emergent decisions – in other words, decisions that are not related to the topic in question, but are derived from other issues brought about by the discussion.

The following section presents several examples from the meetings and WA dataset to illustrate the characteristics of these DM processes in more detail. The examples are excerpts from DM episodes that deal with various topics in respect to the TP and other general tasks that best represent the daily reality of the TEFL team. It should be borne in mind that several categories are demonstrated by more than one extract,

and in these cases the extracts that have been selected illustrate the types of DM process that they belong to.

4.2.1 Straightforward DM processes

The most overt and simple way to signal that a decision has been reached is to simply state the desired decision (Holmes and Marra, 2003). The straightforward DM processes are those that are initiated in short, neat sequences and linear turn sequences, and comprise three basic elements (issue-proposal-decision) of DM processes. Often, the issues and solutions could be also be constructed and condensed into an utterance. A straightforward DM episode is less time-consuming as it is often dominated by those with power. The power does not only refer to legitimate power (i.e. the formal leader or the chair of the meeting) but also those who are experts of knowledge and possess epistemic resources (Clifton, 2017). Straightforward DM processes rarely generate multiple decisions but commonly arise with a single, definite decision with agreement that is achieved with ease and ratification that is done explicitly, i.e. through announcement or summary. Marra (2003: 153) terms such a decision a 'speedy decision' that 'does not necessarily gain the cooperation of the group who have to accept and implement the decision'. Sollitt-Morris (1996: 196), on the other hand, refers to brief decisions as 'simple decisions' that 'can be mooted by the HOD and also by the other meeting participants' (ibid.: 197) and are usually decided by the HOD.

It is important to note that the speed at which decisions are made within straightforward processes is also influenced by the topic under discussion. Simple issues such as the topics demonstrated in Example 4.1 require less negotiation. What is interesting about this category is that many straightforward processes are embedded within another type of DM episode. Example 4.1 is an instance of self-contained DM within longer and more complex DM discussions. These embedded instances would be classified as straightforward processes based on the characteristics as listed in Table 4.1.

Example 4.1⁷

Sarah, who is the leader of the team and the chair of the meeting, makes a quick decision on the type of drink that should be served during a briefing with the school supervisor.

1. Sarah: *dah air teh dakpe deh?*
 so tea should be fine right?
2. Syahira: *teh o jer dakpe*
 just tea is fine
3. Sarah: *bereh bereh*
 that's sorted then that's sorted then
4. Wani: *teh o*
 just tea
5. Sarah *bereh bereh*
 that's sorted then that's sorted then

This example nicely illustrates what Marra (2003) terms 'decisions by authority' and 'simple decisions' as accorded by Sollitt-Morris (1996: 196). In this example, the three steps of the baseline model are enacted collaboratively by several members, i.e. Sarah, Syahira and Wani. The issue + proposal can be represented by line 1 when Sarah initiates a discussion on the type of drink required, followed by a proposal of serving tea. In line 2, she is supported by Syahira, leading Sarah to ratify the proposal with an explicit agreement, using a local dialect that conveys the equivalent meaning as *that's sorted then that's sorted then* (line 3). Subsequently, Wani repeats the proposal to show her agreement and Sarah re-ratifies the decision with the same marker that she has initiated earlier (line 5).

In just five turns on the topic of drinks to be served at a briefing, a decision is made collaboratively and without any conflict. Straightforward DM does not necessarily require unanimous agreement. The process could involve the participation of several

⁷ The original data are italicised for ease of reading

members or individuals with power, either in authority or expertise. The analysis thus demonstrates that it is possible for the analyst to examine the three features of decisions clearly.

The example also demonstrates the strategies used by the formal leader in negotiating her proposal. Sarah, who is the HOD and the chair of the meeting, has the most authority at the meeting. She has the prerogative to initiate the topic and finalise the proposal before ratifying it. In lines 2 and 5, Sarah's ratification to the responses given to her proposal show her discourse strategy as indicating that the topic has been sufficiently discussed. The phrase emphasises her status and 'the right to move the meeting on' (Marra, 2003: 189). Without much negotiation involved, this example aptly illustrates that those in authority typically dominate this category of DM processes.

Example 4.2 is taken from the WA messages and illustrates an instance of a fairly straightforward DM process.

4.2.2 Fairly straightforward DM processes

In this typology of DM talk, decisions are structured similarly to straightforward processes, where they take place within a discrete length of time but with slightly longer turns. Turns are not scattered across other parts of the discussion and decisions are made in a one-off manner without topic deviation. In comparison to straightforward processes which propose a single result, this category generates more than one proposal and at some points, implementations are discussed within the interaction. Ratifications, on the other hand, are indicated explicitly either through verbal and/or a recorded strategy (i.e. note-taking), and implicitly with non-verbal cues such as topic shifts and acknowledgement tokens. In the WA group, ratification can take place in the form of emoji or the actual implementation of the decision. In this fairly straightforward DM category that occurred in M3, there is only one decision being produced, involving the participation of several members. The ratification is done through note-taking by the formal leaders and the other participant.

Example 4.2

Context: This instance is taken from M3 where the participants search for a suitable date to conduct a briefing on the TP programme that will be attended by the FAN staff and school supervisors. In common practice, the students will be assigned two supervisors i.e. academic and school. While the former refers to the FAN lecturers from the English department, the latter refers to the school teachers who will be supervising and guiding the students throughout their three-month TP at the chosen school. Example 4.2 presents the discussion in which the team decides the date for the TP briefing.

1. Sarah: *((talks to Zana)) tapi kita stick tu je lah deh kak Zana deh? pahtu mungkin kita akan bagi briefing ke::: masa kita briefing dengan cikgu kekgi la kita cuba dapat maklumat skolah ane hok 37 ↑ni::: yang //yang*
((talks to Zana)) but we will just stick to the decision lah kak Zana? then maybe we will conduct a briefing or::: when we have the briefing we will try to get the information which schools out of ↑these ::: 37 schools that //that

6 TURNS OMITTED AND ZANA LEAVES THE ROOM

8. Irene: *kalau kita buat 11 (.) January? = ((looks at Sarah))*
what if we do it on 11(.) January? = ((looks at Sarah))
9. Sarah: *= 11 January? =*
10. Irene: *= so after the exam?*
11. Eusof: *dia memang kena ada::: kena ada semua lah owk? =*
it must be::: everyone needs to attend lah right? =
12. Irene: *= mhm mhm*
13. Sarah: *habis exam (.) kita kene key in markah berapa haribulan?*
((laughs)) kita kena key in markah tu? ((smiles and looks at Irene))
after the exam we need to key in the marks when will that be? ((laughs)) we need to key in the marks ((smiles and looks at Irene))
14. Irene: *((looks at Sarah and shakes head)) eh kita memang takleh pikir gi↓tu sebabnya masa kita memang gap dua minggu (.) maksudnya kita memang kena guna //jugak four hours\ tu (.)*

- kita memang tak boleh nak fikir::: nak key in markah::: semua*
 =
 ((looks at Sarah and shakes head)) eh we cannot think like
 that because we have a two week gap (.) that means we
 need to utilise //the four hours\ (.) and we cannot think:::
 about keying in marks::: and everything =
15. Sarah: */betul dah\ = >dok dok< bukan kak Sarah cuba nak (.) cuma*
nak cari tarikh ↑ jangan kita ambil tarikh hok last (.) //final
day\ masa kita nak kena key in markah (.)
/exactly\ = > no no< I mean try try (.) to find we should not
 choose the date ↑ don't choose the final day (.) //final day\
 keying in marks (.)
16. Irene: */oh memang taklah*
*/oh definitely no lah *
17. Sarah: a ah = ((indicates agreement))
18. Irene: = *final day //kita dok tahu owk?*
 = final day //we still don't know right?
19. Sarah: */>masa [name of program]<\ ha (.)((indicates agreement))*
kalau boleh kita cuba elakkan lah =
/>during [name of programme]<\ ha (.) ((indicates
 agreement)) if possible we should try to avoid during [name
 of programme] =
20. Irene: = *[name of program] (.) macam mana kita nak tahu [name of*
program] eh?
 = [name of programme] (.) how are we going to know about
 it eh?
21. Sarah: *[name of program] kalau exam habis::: er::: >dok napok mata*
kalau 7 Januari< dia at least >a week after that kak Syahira
owk?< =
 [name of programme] if the exams finish::: er::: > don't know
 if the exams finish on 7th January< [name of programme] will
 be >at least a week after that right, kak Syahira?<
22. Irene: = mhm mhm =
23. Syahira: = //em\
 24. Irene: /7th 14th \\
 25. Sarah: *14 January (.) >so kalau 11< should be OK lah kot::: 11 (.) 11*
tu birthday [name of a Malaysian celebrity] ((laughing voice))
14th January (.) >so if 11th should be OK lah right::: 11th (.) 11th
is [name of a Malaysian celebrity]'s birthday ((laughing voice))
 26. Irene: *//tak boleh ni\ ((laughs))*
//cannot take the date\ ((laughs))

27. Eusof: /adoi::\ = ((smiley voice))
/oh my::\ = ((smiley voice))
28. Sarah: = birthday [name of a Malaysian celebrity] ((laughs and Eusof laughs))
29. Irene: *sebabnya (.) kalau kita ambil the following week (.) kita dah cramp dah dengan language camp* = ((looks at Sarah))
because (.) if we choose the following week (.) we will be busy with the language camp = ((looks at Sarah))
30. Sarah: = >doksoh doksoh doksoh < (.) preparation untuk language //camp::\
= >don't don't don't< (.) preparation for language //camp::\
31. Syahira: /mhm language camp \\
32. Sarah: ((looks at Irene)) doksoh la (.) we just (.) can we just (.) >get things over and done with< ? ((Irene nods)) macam academic (.) academic supervisor mari pun (.) er kita mari //pun\ kita dengar je supaya kita boleh:: we get the same info (.) itu jer:: ((looks at Syahira)) dia duduk secokoh kejap kak Syahira owk?
=
((looks at Irene)) don't lah (.) we just (.) can we just (.) > get things over and done with<? ((Irene nods)) if the academic (.) academic supervisors come (.) er they will //just\ sit and listen so that all of us will:: get the same info (.) that's it ((looks at Syahira)) they just sit for a while right kak Syahira? =
33. Irene: /mhm::\
34. Syahira: = mhm::
35. Irene: *boleh je jugak (.) sebabnya kalau exam takut ada nak gi invigilate*
yes that should be fine (.) because if it is during the final exam I am afraid that some of us need to invigilate

22 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE THE PARTICIPANTS REINFORCE IRENE'S PROPOSAL

58. Irene: *dah (.) Monday?* =
so (.) Monday? =
59. Sarah: hm Monday okay? =
60. Irene: = 11 (.) sebab (.) >in case Sunday tu kita nak settle files ke< apa //kan::\
= 11th (.) in case (.) > on Sunday we need to sort out files or < //something else::\
61. Sarah: /mhm mhm\\

62. Syahira: /mhm mhm\\ printing apa apa
/mhm mhm\\ or anything for printing
63. Sarah: mhm mhm (.) so::: > pilih tarikh briefing lah deh< =
mhm mhm (.) so::: >choose the briefing date lah < =
64. Syahira: = //mhm\\
65. Irene: ((jots down notes)) /11th 11th\\
66. Sarah: ((jots down notes)) briefing for both

This interaction takes place after the team receives approval by Zana, the HOD regarding the execution of TP. The HOD, who is absent from the meeting initially, comes into the meeting room and is approached by Sarah before they have reached a consensus. Line 1 in the extract indicates the issue when Sarah discusses the topic concerned with Zana about conducting the TP briefing.

This fairly straightforward DM process indicates a proposal suggested by Irene but is discussed in relatively great length before the team arrives at a decision. Irene proposes a date to conduct the briefing on a particular date, i.e. on the 11th January (line 8). She attempts to exert her influence by suggesting that the short break after the students' final exams is the best time to conduct the briefing as the staff will be free from teaching and invigilation. She also reinforces her proposal repeatedly which can be seen throughout her posts (lines 10, 14 and 29). Sarah shows her disagreement with Irene's proposal implicitly, by her reluctance to commit to the date suggested by Irene and claims knowledge that the lecturers will be busy with submission of students' marks to the online system (lines 13 and 15). The lecturers would usually be given several weeks to finalise the marks as well as to key them into the system. According to Sarah, this period is a critical time for them all. At this stage, Sarah indirectly challenges the proposal and this re-establishes her position as the formal leader who has the most knowledge about the team.

Irene's rapid reply may function as a way to quickly correcting Sarah's misunderstanding towards her suggestion (line 16). With a doubt expressed in Sarah's turn, she, on the other hand, acknowledges the most experienced member, Syahira for confirmation (line 21).

Sarah's respective turn steers the group to a decision when she agrees with Irene's opinion and seeks the views of others about having the briefing on the proposed date (line 25). Irene backs her proposal about conducting the briefing on 11th January by foreseeing the task that the team would be busy with, i.e. organising a language camp. If they do not hold the briefing on the suggested date, the team must carry out two events simultaneously. Irene's prediction that the team will have a hard time doing this receives attention from Sarah. With a rapid pace in her voice, she strongly agrees and her reply shows great support on Irene's suggestion (line 30).

Her confirmation of Irene's suggestion shows that Sarah, yet again, takes responsibility for deciding and setting what is acceptable and the best time for the team to execute their tasks.

Eventually, Sarah makes an authoritative move by urging the other members to come to a consensus. Her turn (line 32) conveys her exasperation in her tone of voice and her demand to end the discussion. She elaborates further that the briefing does not involve hassle for the academic staff and as previously mentioned, she assumes an appropriate amount of work and responsibility within the group, and within the FAN staff generally. With a discourse marker *mmm*, Irene and Syahira show agreement with Sarah's logical reasoning (lines 33-34).

In line 60, Irene re-states the proposed date for the briefing and it is Sarah's discourse marker that indicates the ratification of the proposal (line 63). The ratification is emphasised with her invitation to the other members to choose the briefing date, and also the act of jotting down the finalised date by Irene and Sarah (lines 65 and 66).

This extract displays longer turns than Example 4.1 (66 turns), yet still follows the same baseline model in reaching a decision. The problem is initiated by Sarah (line 1), the proposal is made by Irene (line 8), a decision is reached by Sarah and Irene (lines 25 and 66) and a ratification by Sarah (lines 63 and 66). There is no implementation of the proposal in this instance.

This example is an instance of a ratification that takes place through shared discourse marker, i.e. an acknowledgement token (mhm mhm) and topic shift, and is made explicit through the action of jotting it down by Irene and Sarah.

Example 4.3 presents another instance of a fairly straightforward DM process that is taken from the team's WA group. In comparison to Example 4.2, this example demonstrates a ratification that utilises an emoji and is reinforced by the implementation of the decision.

Example 4.3^{8 9}

Context: This discussion takes place in the WA group. Zana asks whether any of the members have upcoming classes with the TEFL students¹⁰, so that she can pass a particular form to the respective staff member to disseminate to the students.

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------|--------|---|
| 17. | 19/10/2015, 4:06 pm | Zana: | <i>sape ada kls ngan tefl tmrw? nk
 –
 kna dorang isi IC no
 who has class with tefl tmrw?
 need to ask them to fill in their
 identity card (ic) number</i> |
| 18. | 19/10/2015, 4:08 pm | Sarah: | <i>Takde kakzana, tapi blh je suh
 –
 dorang dtg ofis isi since kita
 semua tadop esok
 No one kakzana, but can ask
 them to fill in at the ofis since all
 of us will not be here tomorrow</i> |
| 19. | 19/10/2015, 4:12 pm | Zana: | <i>ok. we nd ic no 2 send our ltter 2
 –
 education state department.
 our office doesnt hv this info</i> |
| 20. | 19/10/2015, 4:13 pm | Zana: | <i>i wl leave it with [name of a
 –
 person]</i> |

⁸ Spelling, grammar and capitalisation have been left as in the original.

⁹ *kak*, i.e. a shortened form of *kakak*, as a polite form of address for older women to show respect and close relationships (Kuang, 2011).

¹⁰ I refer to the students involved in the teaching placement as TEFL (pseudonym) students, pre-service teachers and trainee teachers. These terms are used interchangeably and are referring to the same cohort of students unless stated otherwise.

21. 19/10/2015, 4:18 pm Zana: all 99 of them
—
22. 19/10/2015, 4:18 pm Zana: [A photo of the form attached]
—
23. 19/10/2015, 5:16 pm Sarah: Ok kak zana, i ll inform tefl students to do the needful.
—
24. 19/10/2015, 5:20 pm Zana: *but d prblm is edok opis kita xdok org*
—
but d prblm is tomorrow
nobody will be at the office
25. 19/10/2015, 5:20 pm Zana: *cn u ask sorang 2 gt it frm.me 2day? b4 6.30*
—
cn u ask someone 2 get it
frm.me 2day? b4 6.30
26. 19/10/2015, 5:21 pm Sarah: *Hmm [name of a person] pon tadop ke*
—
Hmm even [name of a person]
will not be there?
27. 19/10/2015, 5:21 pm Sarah: *U mean sorang2 to give their ic to u now?*
—
U mean one by one to give their
ic to u now?
28. 19/10/2015, 5:22 pm Zana: *[name of a person] xdok gok*
—
[name of a person] will not be
there
29. 19/10/2015, 5:22 pm Zana: *all stdnts kna isi.*
—
all stdnts need to fill in the form
30. 19/10/2015, 5:22 pm Sarah: *Kalu kita bg ke dornng kebarangkalian ilang ke dop borng tu?*
—
If we give them the form is there
any possibility that the form will
be lost?
31. 19/10/2015, 5:22 pm Zana: *mybe ask rep dia to take it frm me*
—
mybe ask their rep
(representative) to take it frm
me

32. 19/10/2015, 5:22 pm Sarah: *Okay i ll call [name of a student].*
 – *I trust her my whole life...*
Hamboihhh
Okay i ll call [name of a student]
I trust her my whole life...
Hamboihhh [interjection]
33. 19/10/2015, 5:23 pm Zana: 👍 👍
 –
34. 19/10/2015, 5:23 pm Zana: she wl b responsble 2 return it 2
 – us
35. 19/10/2015, 5:23 pm Sarah: I ll get the doc from u ya. U r still
 – in ur office eh?
36. 19/10/2015, 5:28 pm - Zana: yes
37. 19/10/2015, 5:37 pm Zana: *solat jp td*
 – I went for prayer just now
38. 19/10/2015, 5:37 pm Sarah: *I gi amik deh*
 – I will take it now deh
39. 19/10/2015, 5:42 pm Zana: ok
 –

While there is a lot to say about the extract, we are, however, focusing on how a decision is reached in the WA group. In line 17, Zana raises the issue by asking for those who have classes with the TEFL students so that she can distribute a form for the students to fill in. Subsequently, Sarah proposes asking the students to submit the required information to the office's support staff. This is the first proposal in response to the issue discussed, and her proposal is approved by Zana, through the discourse marker *ok...* (line 19) and suggests an implementation to the proposal. According to Zana, she will leave the relevant document with one of the staff, and she substantiates this with a photo of the document attached in the discussion group (lines 20-22).

The proposal does not last for long as Zana proposes another solution to this issue. Since most of the students will be attending the university's convocation ceremony, Zana then suggests that a student representative could directly get the document from her. Sarah seeks clarification on this proposal, asking whether the students

need to submit the required information individually to Zana (line 27). Zana further re-emphasises her proposal, but she mitigates it with the discourse marker *maybe... to take it from me*. The proposal could be also seen as a (mitigated) directive given to Sarah to pass the document to the student representative. This claim is supported by Sarah's compliance, when she aptly responds to Zana's proposal with an exclamation remark of amazement, *Hamboihh* (line 32) and an exaggeration expression *I trust her with my whole life*, i.e. that she trusts the student representative will keep the document safe.

Following this, Zana responds with a double thumbs up hand sign emoji 🍑🍑 (line 33), presumably indicating her approval, and thus ratifying the decision. In this excerpt, the emoji is used to convey agreement, acceptance or acknowledgement, especially when it is followed by compliance by a subordinate. The double thumbs up emoji reinforces Zana's intended message. Evans (2017: 135) mentions that when multimodal support such as an emoji is used to accompany words, it emphasises the idea being expressed.

What makes this episode different from the straightforward category (Example 4.1) and Example 4.2, is the implementation of proposals involved in the discussion. Based on the structure of the decision, there are two proposals involved. The first is initiated by Zana when she asks about the student representative getting the document from her, while the second is proposed by Sarah involving distributing the document to the students. As mentioned previously, the implementation of the decision is included in the 'fairly straightforward' structure. In this excerpt, the act of decision implementation is seen from lines 35-39 where the responses indicate Sarah's intention to collect the document from Zana before handing it to the student representative. In the respective lines (lines 35-39), we are informed that the decision reached earlier is final and that the participants are implementing the decision.

The use of emoji has become a fascinating characteristic in DM as they change the way messages are communicated and, depending on the communicative functions of emoji, they simplify the ratification of DM talk. Rather than typing verbatim, an

emoji saves time in conveying acceptance and agreement on proposals. As well as representing emotion markers (Darics, 2012; Skovholt et al., 2014), emoji also function as contextualising cues of ratification. Despite this, due to the vague meanings emoji can serve within an interaction, contextual cues and knowledge of context are crucial when interpreting them.

In this context when decisions are not explicitly ratified, the emoji can indicate a form of ratification. The ratification could be strengthened by the actual implementation of the decision by the participants. However, in situations when ratifications or emoji are entirely absent in WA discussions, the actual implementation of the proposal could suggest that a decision has been reached.

Fairly straightforward processes see decisions being made and implemented in a coherent and neat turns sequences, despite having more proposals put forward at one time. Leadership, on the other hand, appears to be more collaborative with other members jointly authoring the decision.

4.2.3 Complex DM processes

Complex DM processes are characterised by turns that are distributed across different stages of meetings or in the WA group. Contributions are messy, issues are re-raised, several proposals are proposed and revisited, and implementation of future action is presented within the talk. Participants are involved actively as they overcome some resistance and opposition in reaching a decision. It is also important to acknowledge that this category produces more than one decision, as straightforward DM processes are embedded within these cyclical turns. Topic deviation is expected and the ratification of the decision can be done either explicitly or implicitly and verbally or non-verbally.

The examples of this process are taken from M1 and the main issue that is raised relates to changes for the students' assessment forms. For ease of understanding, the example has been divided into three sections. They are labelled accordingly with a, b and c.

Example 4.4a

Context: Irene raises the issue of the necessary changes that need to be made to the TP assessment forms.

1. Irene: *so file (.) >macam dari segi forms tu kita nak revise dulu ke?< (.) kita nak guna je?*
so file (.) > in terms of the forms do we need to revise them?
< (.) we just use them?
2. Zana: *form::: untuk?*
form::: for ?
3. Irene: *em::: assessment::: >sume sume< yang buat hari tu*
em::: assessment::: >all the previous forms< that we have compiled the other day
4. Zana: *eh kita buat post mortem dok hari tu lepas balik daripada::: teaching practicum (.) ((Irene shakes head)) eh ada::: >kelmarin hari tu buat<*
eh did we do the post mortem after the last::: teaching practicum (.) ((Irene shakes head)) eh yes::: >we did one the other day <
5. Irene: *<ha skali tu je la post mortem owk>*
<ha that's the only post mortem right>
6. Zana: *rasanya::: tengok balik tengok balik dia punya::: a↑pa (.) tengok balik er::: decision making tu macam mana hok post mortem macam mana (xxx) ada yang::: post mortem*
I think::: need to refer refer to :: wh↑at (.)refer::: the decisions
er::: made in the post mortem (xxx) decisions::: from the post mortem
7. Irene: *oh Irene takdok*
oh I was not there
8. Zana: (xxx)
9. Irene: *>post mortem [name of the program] Irene takde<*
>post mortem [name of the programme] I was not there<
10. Zana: *[name of the programme] has:::*
11. Irene: *em:::=*
12. Zana: *= masa tu::: Irene takdok owk?=
= during that time::: you were not there right?=
=em::: ((shakes head))*
13. Irene:

SILENCE

14. Irene: >*sebab kita jalan serentak dengan [name of programme] jugok ni*< *sekali lagi*
>because we will conduct the [name of programme] simultaneously with TP< again

Example 4.4a demonstrates the discussion between Irene and Zana on the possible changes that they could make to the TP assessment forms. The discussion takes place while Sarah and Syahira were out of the meeting room to get other jobs done at the main office.

In this extract, the issue concerned is interrupted by the topic deviation by Irene. The main issue discussed is raised by Irene (line 1) who enquires about the need to revise the respective forms before utilising them for the TP programme. In responding to this, Zana mentions a follow-up review meeting that they had conducted with regard to the improvement of the TP programme (line 4) and proposes that the TEFL team refers to the decisions made on that occasion (line 6). The proposal suggested by Zana is the second proposal for the discussion. Mentioning that she was absent during the review meeting, and thus does not have any knowledge of it (lines 7 and 9), Irene introduces a new issue where she expresses her concerns about their department handling two practical training sessions, i.e. the TP and another undergraduate course (line 14). Irene's turn leads the interaction away from the initial topic raised, which brings the current topic of discussion to a halt. Example 4.4b demonstrates the continuation of this discussion in another phase of the meeting.

Example 4.4b

Context: Approximately 10 minutes later, the participants return to the discussion about whether there is a need for revision on the TP assessment forms.

208. Sarah: *hok tadi bahagian kite kena panggil (.) kite nak brief derang kan? >the dos and the don't's everything< dari segi form (.) evaluation (.) assessment kita tu ada ada nak bekki dok? //takdok doh owk? *
*so that is about the briefing (.) we need to brief them right? >the dos and the don't's everything< in terms of form (.) evaluation (.) assessment is there anything that we want to change? //no changes right? *
209. Irene: */a ah\\ ((indicates agreement)) nak bekki ke tak? =*
/a ah\\ ((indicates agreement)) does it need to be amended?
 =
210. Sarah: *= nak bekki ke dok?*
= does it need to be amended?
211. Irene: *//kalau dok Irene boleh proceed\ dengan::: photocopy*
//if not I could proceed\ with::: photocopy
212. Sarah: */kita nak go through?\\ ke kita (.) kita nak check sekali lagi?=*
/we want to go through?\\ or we (.) we want to do examine again? =
213. Syahira: *rasa::: =*
i think::: =
214. Zana: *=((looks at Syahira)) rasa macam::: kite kene ambil kira jugak wat (.) orang suggest dulu after::: post mortem tu ((looks at Irene)) kalau derang takdok (.) //takdok\\:::*

=((looks at Syahira)) I think::: we need to consider (.) the previous suggestions during::: the post mortem ((looks at Irene)) if they do not (.) // do not\\ :::
215. Sarah: */do we:::\\ do we ever have any post //mortem?\ [sceptical voice]*
216. Zana: *((points index finger to Sarah, nods and looks at Syahira)) /kan ada kan:::\\? ha ada:::=*
((points index finger to Sarah, nods and looks at Syahira)) /yes we did right:::\\? ha yes:::=
217. Sarah: *= kita ada ke? =*
= did we? =
218. Zana: *= ((looks at Sarah)) ada:::*
= ((looks at Sarah)) yes:::
- 19 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE THE PARTICIPANTS DISCUSS ABOUT A POST MORTEM OF A DIFFERENT PRACTICAL PLACEMENT

237. Syahira: //teaching practicum kita::: dok dok::: kacau \
- //teaching practicum we do not do not::: interfere\
238. Zana: /presentation::: form takdok \ \ =
- /presentation::: no forms\ \ =
239. Sarah: = kita nak buat dok er::: reflection kene wat owk? //kene
- wat:::\
- = are we going to conduct er::: we need to have a reflection
- session right? // we should have:::\
240. Irene: /reflection kene wat ((nods))\ \ sebab benefit untuk juniors=
- / there should be a reflection session ((nods)) \ \ as it benefits
- the juniors =
241. Sarah: = mhm mhm:::
- SILENCE
- THE PARTICIPANTS CONTINUE DISCUSSING ABOUT THE LAST
- POST MORTEM

By this time, Sarah and Syahira are back in the meeting room and both are now participants in the interaction. At this stage, it is Sarah who brings back the discussion on track by reinforcing Irene's proposal, while at the same time proposes that the changes on the form are unnecessary (line 208). Irene immediately repeats Sarah's enquiry about revising the assessment form (line 209) and proposes an implementation of the proposal, that she will proceed with the photocopying work if the form does not need any changes to be made (line 211). Here, Irene attempts to close the negotiation by suggesting an implementation to the proposal.

However, Zana re-states her proposal about referring to the decision made in the last follow-up review meeting (line 214) and keeps convincing the team about the review meeting (line 218), and after a brief discussion on this issue, Syahira comes to a conclusion that the last follow-up review meeting did not change the TP assessment form (line 237). The issue about the last follow-up meeting brought by Zana has caused the participants to shift their attention to the main agenda.

As Syahira's turn is related to TP generally, Sarah diverts the team's attention by raising a question about the necessity of having a reflection session for the TP. Again, the team deviates from the topic of discussion at hand because it appears that the

concern is abrupt. Irene expands on the newly initiated topic, stating that the reflection session is necessary for the benefit of the younger group of TEFL students (line 240). As per common practice within the department, a reflection session is normally held at the end of the TP. The session acts as an interactive gathering for the TEFL students to raise any issues or problems faced during the training. The students also have an opportunity to share their experience with the younger students who are about to embark on a TP the following year. The discussion then continues with the topic of the follow-up review meeting, initiated by Syahira.

At this point, a decision on another topic (rather than the changes on the assessment form) is made. Instead of making decision whether the TP assessment should be revised, the participants have decided briefly on the need to conduct a forthcoming TP reflection session. This is observed through a very brief process of DM, with a proposal by Sarah (line 239), which is also supported by Irene (line 240) and a ratification by Sarah that is signalled through backchannelling: *mhm mhm* (line 241). According to Marra (2003: 82), her participants often use a discourse marker, *okay*, for ratifying a decision. In this extract, I observed that the participants utilise discourse markers such as *mhm mhm*, which generally expresses a view aligning with the interactant. The turn by Sarah (line 241) conveys this purpose, in which she reinforces her view about conducting a reflection session and aligns herself with Irene's view. This very straightforward decision emerges swiftly as it is embedded within an ongoing topic that discusses other issues. The silence towards the end of the extract is significant as it could be an indication of ratification of the decision reached (Marra, 2003).

Example 4.4c shows a continuation of the main topic of the discussion, i.e. to revise the assessment forms approximately 28 minutes later.

Example 4.4c

Context: The participants continue their discussion of whether it is necessary for them to make changes to the students' assessment forms.

691. Syahira: *((looks at Zana)) kita perlu ke::: er kite perlu pandangan semua kan dok? [Zana nods] kalau kita::: er macam email je forms tu?*
((looks at Zana)) do we need::: er do we need the opinion from our colleagues? ((Zana nods)) if we::: er email the forms only?
692. Sarah: *>suruh //dia orang bagi feedback\<*
>ask //them to give feedback\<
693. Irene: */kita mesti ada ni::: \ departmental meeting ((laughing voice and looks at Zana)) departmental meeting kan?*
/we will have::: \ departmental meeting ((laughing voice and looks at Zana)) departmental meeting right?
694. Sarah: *= ada dok? ada dok lagi? =*
= is it? Is the meeting going to be held? =
695. Syahira: *= takdok doh::: //next year pulok *
= no::: //it will be held next year
696. Zana: */setahun sekali je*
/once a year
 15 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE SARAH PROPOSES TO DISTRIBUTE THE FORM TO THE ACADEMIC STAFF
711. Irene: *email::: maksudnya ada feedback apa apa tak pasal teaching practicum =*
email::: this means if there any feedback on the teaching practicum =
712. Sarah: *= mhm mhm*
713. Irene: *>yang tak bagi feedback tu kira::: dia setuju je apa apa yang //kita buat\ <*
> those who do not give the feedback are assumed::: they agree with whatever //we decide \ <
714. Sarah: */a ah mhm mhm\ OK*
715. Irene: *>maksudnya bukan pasal forms sahaja lah teaching practicum as a whole (.) maksudnya ada ape ape ke < =*
> this means that not only the forms lah but on the teaching practicum as a whole (.) what if there are other issues < =
716. Sarah: *= penambahbaikan*
= revision
717. Zana: *>((i think)) ((looks at Syahira)) kena tengok balik yang::: post mortem yang dulu tu (.) amenda kita decide masa tu<*
> ((i think)) ((looks at Syahira)) need to refer to::: what we have decided in the past follow-up review meeting (.) whatever that we have decided at that time <

718. Sarah: >*masa tu group [name of a person]* < =
> it was [name of a person] team < =
719. Zana: = ah:::
720. Irene: >*ha serious Irene dok ingat tak dok kat folder* < =
> ha seriously I don't remember if the form was not in the
folder < =
721. Zana: ((looks at Syahira)) = *check balik* (xxx)
((looks at Syahira)) = check again (xxx)
722. Syahira: ((looks at Irene and nods)) *tapi tapi (.) dia dia buat post mortem*
((looks at Irene and nods)) but but (.) she she did a follow-up review meeting
10 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE THE PARTICIPANTS TALK ABOUT THE FOLLOW-UP REVIEW MEETING
734. Zana: *nanti I check balik (.) post mortem ni*
i will check again (.) the follow-up review meeting
TWO TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE SYAHIRA RECALLS THE DISCUSSION AT THE FOLLOW-UP REVIEW MEETING
737. Zana: *i rasa takdok dalam::: i dont know let me check the (xxx) the (xxx)*
i think it is not in::: i dont know let me check the (xxx) the (xxx)

Approximately 28 minutes later, a third proposal is made in response to the main issue. It is Syahira who proposes to include the other academic staff's viewpoints regarding the forms' revision via email (line 691). The aim of this method is to gain feedback from their colleagues who are not part of the meeting.

Irene then adds to Syahira's suggestion about sending emails to the academic staff. She mentions that the team could assume that those who do not send their responses or comments on the forms indicate their agreement with whatever decisions the committee make on the forms and the TP as a whole (line 711). Sarah shows agreement with Irene's contribution, as indicated via backchannelling - *aah*, *mhm mhm* and *OK* (lines 712 and 714). The discourse marker *a ah* is a local discourse marker, which is also understood as OK. These discourse markers indicate alignment with Irene's proposal.

However, the alignment towards Syahira's proposal does not indicate that a decision has been reached. This is due to Zana, restates firmly (yet politely) the suggestion she put forth in the earlier discussion on the need to refer to the outcome of the past follow-up review meeting (line 717, see also Example 4.4a). Her turn stresses the need for the team to consider looking at past decisions (line 717), and appears to be more of a directive to the team. The directive is more apparent in line 721, where Zana instructs Syahira to examine the old documents in respect to the decision made in the past review meeting. Zana subsequently mentions to the team that she will be examining the document herself and emphasises this in the final turn of the extract (line 737), hence indicates her authority over the decision. The discussion continues with the issue of the past review meeting.

In this complex DM episode, it is pretty challenging to identify the decision due to spiral turns that are distributed across other stages of the meeting. Contributions are messy, reversions (Janis and Mann, 1977) of issues and other topics are raised, implementations of decisions (email the academic staff, line 691; gain feedback during a departmental meeting; line 693; send a copy of the form to all academic staff; line 711; and refer to decisions made in the previous review meeting, line 717) are discussed and the explicit ratification is absent. The participants are actively involved, and it appears that they have to overcome some resistance and opposition to reach a consensus. The emphasis by Zana on re-examining the relevant document herself (lines 734 and 737) is a decision, as there is no further negotiation on the other proposals after her affirmation. Besides that, the discussion on the issues is expanded, which indicates the participants' willingness to align with Zana.

As illustrated by the extracts, this category of DM produces more than one decision instantaneously. The first decision is that of amending the form. In implementing the proposal, most of the participants agree to use emails to invite responses from the participants. The implementation is proposed by Syahira, altered by Irene, and subsequently ratified by Sarah. This suggestion is accepted by Sarah through backchannels (*a ah, mhm mhm* and *OK*) while Irene explains her proposal. This instance demonstrates that a collaborative effort from the participants, regardless of their positions, and when brief contributions are made by someone with legitimate

power (in this case Sarah) in the discussion, could be an indicator that a decision has been made. This is supported by Marra (2003: 168) who stated that high status participants within an interaction 'hold sway in the decision-making process'.

The second decision is the proposal put forth by Zana, who repeatedly mentions the need to refer to the decisions made in the previous follow-up review meeting (see Example 4.4a, line 6; Example 4.4c, lines 717 and 737). This appears to be a straightforward decision made by Zana, who uses her authority to insist the team acts upon her suggestion. Though the suggestion put forth by Zana lacks ratification, an unequivocal decision is made when she insists on examining the necessary documents in respect of the review meeting (line 737). For this decision, Zana uses her authority as the HOD to decide for the team. This category of DM processes show that DM can be made collaboratively, but the final decision may be achieved unilaterally.

4.2.4 Highly complex DM processes

Like complex DM processes, highly complex DM talk involves several proposals, implementations and reversions. The process demands active participation from the floor with other issues discussed intermittently. What makes this category highly complex is the modification that takes place even after the decision is ratified by those with higher authority. The modification of decisions, on the other hand, is more unilateral, where participants with authority will modify and subsequently have the final say on the decision.

The example of a highly complex DM process from the meeting dataset is divided into three episodes that are labelled a, b, and c. The extract below takes place in M1, where the topic of discussion is the search for the right person to inform the schools in Bukit¹¹, a district located 100 km away, that the students will no longer be involved in the TP there.

¹¹ Bukit is a pseudonym to replace the name of the location mentioned in the discussion

Example 4.5 a

Context: Irene makes an enquiry about the person in charge of informing some schools about the cancellation. Not only has she raised the issue, but also proposes that the person should make a call to the schools affected.

1. Irene: >lepas tu < (.) speaking of (.) call call ni (.) kak [name of a person] ada message Irene hari tu dia tanya er::: ((looks at Zana)) sebab kita dah call sekolah kat Bukit ↑kan (.) so dia kata kita perlulah lah call balik::: so siapa yang nak call?
>and then < (.) speaking of calling (.) kak [name of a person] texted me that day she asked er::: ((looks at Zana)) because we already called schools in Bukit ↑right (.) so she said that we need to call them back::: so who is going to make the call?
2. Zana: call balik tak jadi? =
call them back for cancellation? =
3. Irene: = hmm
4. Zana: dia orang semua::: dah beri agreement blake ke ni:::?=
have all the schools::: agreed to it? =
5. Irene: = mhm::: ((nods))
6. Zana: (XXX)
7. Syahira: ((looks at Zana)) kita boleh ke=
((looks at Zana)) can we =
8. Zana: ((looks at Syahira)) = wat surat je lah =
looks at Syahira)) = just write them a letter =
9. Syahira: = nak =
= want =
10. Sarah: = ↑tapi kita tak engage lagi dengan dia lagi kan ?
= ↑but we haven't engaged with them yet, right?
11. Irene: tapi kita call::: =
but we have called::: =
12. Sarah: = verbally =
13. Syahira: = kita::: enquire je =
= we::: just enquired =
14. Irene: = //ha ah\ ((indicates agreement))
15. Sarah: >/so\\ kalau nak selamat nak dalam keadaan ni (.) >baik tulis surat ah owk?< tapi nak draft comel lah (.) nak call ke::: nak nak::: nak hantar surat? =
>/so\\ to be on the safe side (.) it is better to send them letters right?< but we need to draft the letters courteously lah (.) or

- do you want to call or do you want want::: want to send them letters? =
16. Syahira: = >call je sebab kita nak call dia kita nak refer atas call kita tu (xxx)= =>just call them but how are they going to refer our calls ? (xxx) =
17. Irene: = mhm mhm::: ((nods))
18. Zana: *takut orang yang the person we talk to tu:::* =
i am afraid that the person that we talk to:::=
19. Syahira: = different people =
20. Zana: = *hor different person kan (.) ha*
=yes different person yes (.) ha
21. Irene: *sebab //hari tu nama:::\ tu memang::: >pengetua je lah< eh school guru besar (.) kalau ikut list hari tu (.) mhm mhm*
because //that day the list:::\ is::: > it was only the principals lah< eh school headmasters (.) if we follow the list (.) mhm mhm
22. Zana: */kecuali kita tahu \ \ =*
/unless we know \ \ =
23. Syahira: *((looks at Zana)) kita perlu dok er::: sekolah Bukit jugok kalau maknenye:::=*
((looks at Zana)) do we need er::: schools in Bukit too if let's say::: =
24. Irene: *((shakes head)) = eh tak perlu*
((shakes head)) = eh we don't need them

After Irene raises the issue of the person who will take up the responsibility, Zana asks for clarification (line 4) about the schools' current involvement with the TP. Not long after, a second proposal is put forward by Zana, in which she suggests sending official letters to notify the schools about the cancellation (line 8). Before everyone gives their opinion on the proposal, Sarah asks about the latest communication they had with the schools (line 10). Sarah then reiterates both suggestions put forth by Zana and Irene simultaneously, i.e. to either send the letters or make calls to the schools (line 15). At this point, Sarah is trying to agree with Zana's solution, but after a few hedges, she mentions Irene's proposal. She seems tentative about these two suggestions, as shown towards the end of the turn in her use of self-repairs in

restating Zana's proposal. Her turn could be seen as inviting the team to take a moment to reflect upon Zana's proposal again before they agree to it.

It appears that Sarah's contribution is significant as it has altered the direction of the potential decision (Zana's proposal), to which Syahira then shows her agreement in making the phone calls (line 16). Challenging to this proposal, Zana then expresses her concern about the problems that may arise, as they do not know which specific school officers to notify when they call the schools (line 18).

Syahira subsequently proposes the team consider engaging with the schools in Bukit (line 23). Since Bukit is located approximately 100 km from their workplace, Irene firmly answers that they cannot consider sending the students there, as this will pose difficulties for the lecturers who have to do supervision (line 24). At this stage, Syahira appears to be deviating from the topic of discussion, which leads to several turns by the others discussing schools in Bukit as their back-up plan. Instead of making a decision on the topic at hand, the participants reach another decision outside the current topic. The concern initiated by Syahira is resolved by Irene's (polite) insistence on excluding schools that are located far from their base. She does this through her friendly tone of voice and an exclamation, *eh*, indicating her surprise and disagreement at Syahira's suggestion.

At this stage, two issues are discussed, i.e. the person responsible for the task (line 1) and the possibility of considering which schools in Bukit to place the students for their TP (line 23). On the other hand, two suggestions are proposed which include making calls to schools on the Bukit list (line 1) and writing letters to inform them about the cancellation (line 8).

The discussion around the person in charge of the phone calls is continued in Example 4.5b.

Example 4.5b

Context: Approximately two minutes after the last conversation, Sarah brings the discussion back to the topic of making phone calls to the schools in Bukit.

54. Sarah: >so sekarang ni ni nak call lah ni?< kita call all schools in Bukit?
>so now this this we will call lah?< we call all schools in Bukit?
55. Zana: >yang ni dia ada list lagi? ((Irene nods)) eh boleh je< =
>we still have the list ? ((Irene nods)) eh yes we can make the calls <=
56. Sarah: = >who< who will do the calling? =
57. Irene: = ha tu lah:::
= that is the problem lah:::
58. Zana: ((laughing voice)) kita akan call sikit sikit sorang lah (.) //bagi
macam hari ni baru ni\
((laughing voice)) we will divide the tasks lah (.) // divide the
tasks like we did the other day\
59. Sarah: /kita mitok tolong [name of a person] jugok\\ boleh ke ? mitok
tolong //dia::: balik\\ ((Irene nods))
/can we ask for ((name of a person))'s help \\ can we? asks her
help //she::: in charge of the call ((Irene nods))?
60. Zana: /hor boleh je\\ ((nods)) =
/yes that will do \\ ((nods)) =
61. Sarah: = >ha dia tepon lima sekolah dakpe dah (.) pahtu kita bagi bagi<
= >yes she just make calls to five schools (.)we will do the rest <
62. Zana: so jadi sekarang ni dia (.) untuk dia dia untuk dia (.) > call balik
semua sekolah tu < instead of
so now she for her (.) for her her to for her (.) >to call back all
schools< instead of
SILENCE
63. Irene >so bagitahu [name of a person]? <
>so inform [name of a person] ? <
64. Zana: = mhm (xxx)

After Sarah brings the discussion back on track and asks the rest of the team for their views on the best method to notify the schools of the cancellation (line 54), Zana suggests that it is convenient for them to make the calls since they still have the list of the schools involved. Consequently, Sarah re-enquires about the appropriate person to be assigned the task (line 56), to which Zana proposes that the tasks are to be divided equally among themselves. Sarah, on the other hand, proposes that they could ask an academic staff member who had contacted the schools previously to take up the responsibility (line 59). Receiving the green light from Zana (line 60), Sarah probes

further into her proposal, stating that the staff could make calls to five schools from the list while the rest would be handled by the other team members (line 61). In the final line of this extract, Zana indicates her agreement with this suggestion but makes an alteration to it, asserting that the respective staff could make all the calls (line 62). Her turn here is seen as taking the responsibility of the chair by fairly summing up the discussion and ratifying the decision. The silence from the floor could be another indication that a decision has been made. This view is supported by Marra (2009: 108), who claims that 'if a solution proposed is acceptable, then silence may be understood by the other meeting participants as an absence of disagreement and therefore as decision ratification'. Irene's turn, on the other hand, acts as a proposal of implementation when she seeks confirmation about informing the staff appointed for the task (line 63). At this stage, two solutions are proposed (line 58 by Zana and line 59 by Sarah) which lead to a decision to appoint the staff member as the person to take up the role. The decision is briefly ratified by Zana (lines 60-62) through a brief backchannel, 'mhm' indicating her agreement and in response to Irene's clarifying question (line 64).

The decision, however, does not last long, as Zana changes her mind at the end of the meeting, as demonstrated in Example 4.5c.

Example 4.5c

Context: Approximately 19 minutes later (roughly after 415 turns), Zana brings up the topic of making calls to the schools in Bukit abruptly while the participants are talking about some of the issues they faced in the previous TP.

473. Zana: = *OK hok hok list yang call sekolah tu wi ke Wani before kita::*
 ((laughs)) ganti dia ((laughs))
 OK the the list of schools that we need to call give it to Wani
 before we:: ((laughs)) replace her ((laughs))
474. Syahira: ((looks at Zana with a confused face)) list (.) list (.) =
475. Sarah: =//*hok call Bukit owh::*\
 = //the Bukit list::\

476. Zana: = /list hok\\ telefon Bukit owh sebab dia committee //kita::\ *give me the list I ask her to do it ((looks at Irene))*
 = /the\\ Bukit's list because she is still in //our::\ committee
 give me the list I ask her to do it ((looks at Irene))
477. Irene: /a::\ OK ((writes notes))

In this extract, Zana re-initiates the topic but proposes a different suggestion from the one she had ratified earlier. In line 473, she suggests that the calls to the respective schools could be done by Wani, the member who wanted to withdraw from the committee, mentioning that the task will be Wani's final job before she is replaced by somebody else, a decision which is in contrast with what the team has decided earlier. She also suggests a proposal of implementation, directing Irene to hand in the schools' lists to her so that she can pass them to Wani. As the HOD, Zana is authorised to give orders to others. Here, she imposes her authority. With the proposal made by Zana and the implementation of the proposal (line 476), Zana's post, again, indicates that a decision is reached. Irene's turn of a brief response, *OK* (line 477) strengthens the evidence that a new decision has officially been reached. As indicated earlier, ratifications are commonly done by those in positions of authority and so Irene's turn does not act as a ratification, but more likely serves as a confirmation and compliance with Zana's decision. Because Irene is the person in charge of all matters pertaining to the TP, it is expected of her to respond to the decision made.

Example 4.5 a-c illustrates a highly complex DM episode that contains more complex turns dispersed throughout the discussion. In this cyclical structure, the process demands active participation from the floor, with many issues being discussed intermittently, some issues that are re-raised, several solutions and implementations that are recommended and a modification of a decision after it is decided harmoniously. The ratifications for retrospective and final decisions, on the other hand, can be indicated through verbal and non-verbal actions, which include significant silence (Example 4.5b) and an announcement of a decision (Example 4.5c).

What makes it complex is that even after a decision is reached and ratified, the decisions remain open for further scrutiny and change. At first glance, the participants seem to agree to send formal letters to the school, but they gradually change their decision, from 'calling the schools' to 'distributing the workload', to 'asking a former member to do the phone calls' and finally, 'requiring Wani to execute the task'. The modification of the decision proves Boden's (1994) and Huisman's (2001) views that decisions are ephemeral in quality. These changes also support the argument that DM is not a straightforward process but rather incremental and prone to changes and renewal (Huisman, 2001; Halvorsen and Sarangi, 2015).

Interestingly, this type of DM episode does not only occur in meetings but is also present in the WA group. Example 4.6 a-b demonstrate how a decision that is made and ratified in the meeting is later revisited in the WA group, hence this illuminates the intertextuality of DM processes across two contexts.

Example 4.6a

Context: This example is taken from M1, and in this meeting, Eusof is absent. The rest of the participants discuss whether they should give students the freedom to choose their own school for their TP.

1. Sarah: *>ada dok< (.) er::: sebab >pengalaman pengalaman dulu ada hok sekolah ni kita anto< <molek sket lah> sebab sebelum //ni*
>are there< (.) er::: because >the past experience there were some schools that involved with the TP< <we need to send good students lah> because //previously
2. Irene: */yes*
3. Sarah: *ha jadi kalau (.) kalau //hok*
ha so if (.) if //the
4. Syahira: *((looks at Sarah)) /dah\\ kalau dia paka dia (.) dia dia (.) yang decide?*
((looks at Sarah)) /so\\ if they they (.) they they (.) decide?
5. Sarah: *>dia nak gi sekolah ane gitu?< =*
> they choose which school they want to go? < =

6. Syahira: = *bukang::: dia decide::: //grouping dia tu*
= *no::: they decide::: //their groupings*
7. Zana: *((looks at Sarah)) /group dia\\ ↑ada group dia ada hok hanya jugok ada hok bagus::: //hor*
((looks at Sarah)) /their groups\\ ↑in their groups there are underachieving students and good students::: // so
8. Sarah: */hoh sudoh *
/oh no
9. Syahira: *bukan //kita decide takkan kita nak*
no //we decide we will not
10. Irene: */sekarang ↓ni dia\\ dia decide group dia decide schools kan? sekarang ni=*
/so ↓now they\\ they will decide their group they will decide schools right? =
11. Zana: *((looks at Irene)) = >dok school< kita decide for them ((somebody enters the room)) tapi once kita pilih group dia (.) makna >tiga tiga orang< akan g sekolah sama lah=*
((looks at Irene)) = > no the schools< we will decide for them ((somebody enters the room)) but once they choose their own group (.) it means that >all of them< will go to the same school lah =
12. Irene: = *maksudnya kalau jenis nak duduk rumah? >takleh sama je la dok?< (.) kita::: maksud kita er::: ((refers to her note)) kita <decide> > dia decide group< kita decide sekolah =*
= *what about those who wants to stay at their home? >the same rule applies right?< (.) we::: that means we er::: ((refers to her note)) we <decide> > they decide group< we decide the schools =*
13. Syahira: = *OK gini (.) why not (.) ((looks at Zana)) kita bubuh list of school:::=*
= *OK like this (.) why not (.)((looks at Zana)) we distribute the list of schools::: =*
14. Irene: = *a ah ((indicates agreement))*
15. Syahira: *↑dia::: >bagi kita (.) //group dia< dengan::: //school\\ sekolah dia nak gi =*
↑they::: >give us (.) //their group< with::: //schools\\ the schools that they want to go to =
16. Zana: */revise\\ /xxx dia pilih mana dia nak gi*
/revise\\ /xxx) they choose the schools that they want to go

17. Irene: = *a ah ((nods)) (.) <dekat area dia dah> ke::*
 = *a ah ((nods)) (.) <they may choose schools that are near to their> house::*
18. Sarah: *mhm mhm mhm =*
19. Irene: = *gitu*
 = *something like that*
20. Sarah: *boleh gok >first come first serve ah< =*
 that should be fine *>first come first serve ah< =*
21. Syahira: = *ha //first come first *
22. Irene: */mhm*
23. Sarah: */mhm mhm*
24. Irene: = *eh ? >wat gitu eh ?<*
 = *eh? (.) we do something like that eh? ((jots down))*
25. Sarah: *((first come first serve basis)) ((jots down)) (.) first time ever ni ((laughs))*
((first come first serve basis)) ((jots down)) (.) this is first time ever ((laughs))

EIGHT TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE THE PARTICIPANTS REINFORCE THE DECISION

31. Sarah: OK so habis bahagian grouping
 OK so that's the grouping sorted out

Prior to coming to this topic, Sarah mentions to the team that they need to be vigilant in allocating groups of students to some schools participating in TP. This is due to disciplinary problems among students caused by the previous students, which has tarnished the university's reputation. This topic leads Syahira to propose to the team that students should be allowed to choose their own schools for the TP placement (line 4).

Zana reformulates Syahira's proposal and states that the students will be given freedom to form their own groups but the team will have the final say in allocating the school placement for them. In line 13, with the discourse marker *OK*, Syahira departs from the current topic and initiates an implementation for her proposal earlier, suggesting that they could distribute the list of schools to the students for them to choose with ease. Lines 17-21 observe the participants agreeing to Syahira's

proposal and eventually lead Sarah and Irene to make a record of the decision by taking notes (line 25).

It is noteworthy to draw attention to Irene's and Sarah's act of jotting down the decision as indicated in line 24. As mentioned before, Irene is in charge of all the matters pertaining to TP, hence it is not surprising to see her recording the decision. However, in identifying the act of jotting down a decision as an indication of ratification, it is crucial for analysts to refer to the position held by the person. As put forth by Clifton (2012), in order for a proposal to be considered as a decision, the decision should be ratified by those with legitimate power. In this case, the ratification of jotting down the decision is referred to as Sarah's act, who is not only the chair but also the formal leader of the team. Also, the act of summarising the discussion by Sarah indicates her authority by marking that a decision has been made and that the topic has come to an end. (line 31).

This example presents an 'issue-solution-decision progression' (Marra, 2003: 111), indicated by the proposal (line 4), proposal of implementation (line 13) and the ratifications of the decision (lines 25 and 31). Nonetheless, the decision reached in the meeting is revisited a month later, which categorises this instance as a highly complex DM process. Example 5.7b presents the alteration process of the decision that takes place in the WA group.

Example 4.6b

Context: A month after the last conversation, Sarah brings the topic of the students' schools placement to the WA group. She updates the team on the discussion that she had with the students in respect of the issue. The WA platform is seen prominently as a mediated communication tool between the decisions made in meetings.

289)24/11/2015, 9:45 pm - Sarah: Guys, i had a long chat wth students

290)24/11/2015, 9:46 pm- Sarah: *Utk kebaikan bersama, kita pilih sekolah utk diorang. Grouping dorang buay*
For the common good, we will choose school for them. They will d the groupings

291)24/11/2015, 9:46 pm- Sarah: *Buat*
Do [makes repair to the wrong spelling in previous post]

292)24/11/2015, 10:07 pm - Eusof: Ok

293)24/11/2015, 10:07 pm - Eusof: *Tapi ada yg request nak sekolah yg jd muet centre tu mcm mana*
But what about those who request to be placed at schools that were registered as MUET test centre?

294)24/11/2015, 10:08 pm - Eusof: *[name of student] nak school a sbb nak dop umah family dia*
[name of student] wants school A because it is near to his family's home

295)24/11/2015, 10:09 pm - Sarah: *Most importantly dorang kena buat group dorang dulu. Pastu kita decide school. Kalau ada reques tu kita tgk by cases lah kan*
Most importantly they need to form their groups. Then we will decide the schools. if there is such request, we will look by cases lah right

296)24/11/2015, 10:09 pm - Sarah: *Sebab masa discuss dalam group whatsapp tadi diorang yg undi. Justifikasi dorang, kalu dorang pilih, confirm bergaduh*
Because they have voted when we had discussion in the whatsapp group just now. Their justification, if they choose, it will cause conflict among them.

297)24/11/2015, 10:09 pm - Sarah: Heehhe

298)24/11/2015, 10:14 pm - Eusof: Ok

- 299)25/11/2015, 8:42 am - Irene: *Betol2..irene stuju sbb bila duk ckp2,ada yg ckp x adil kalo dtg awl tp x sempat pilih sbb x sempat tulis dulu*
Yes2. I agree because when I talked to them, some of them said it will be unfair if some of them turn up early but do not have the chance to write [on the list] first
- 300)25/11/2015, 10:03 am - Sarah: *Irene & eusof, kaksarah nak jumpa students lepas ni. Irene & eusof ada skali x?*
Irene & eusof, I want to meet the students afterwards. Are you both going to be there?

In line 289, at 9.45 p.m.¹², Sarah updates the team with the decision that she has made after having a substantial discussion with the TEFL students. According to her, the students prefer to be allocated by the staff rather than choosing the schools themselves. In the previous meeting (Example 4.6a), the team had decided to give freedom to the students to choose the schools they preferred. On a macro view of this situation, the time in which the discussion is initiated illustrates the workplace norms imposed by the communication tool used by the team.

Fifteen minutes later, replying with an unelaborated response, *OK* (line 293, Eusof raises a new issue. He expresses his concern about the students who made a request to be allocated to schools where they were registered for the test centre for the Malaysian University English Test (MUET). He also mentions another issue; the demands made by students to be placed in schools that are closer to their home (line 294). These concerns have been addressed in M1 but because he was absent, it is understandable that Eusof raises such concerns to seek clarification. After responding to Eusof, Sarah briefly explains the reasons behind the decision. She

¹² The line numbers, date and time represent the exact details that were taken from the WA group.

explains that the students preferred to be allocated, instead of choosing the schools themselves (line 296).

The next day, Irene responds to the conversation and expands on Sarah's contribution to the students' schools placement (line 299). Her turn does not seem to invite any responses from others. Two hours later, Sarah launches a new topic and asks Eusof and Irene whether they would want to join her for a short meet up with the TEFL students. In the subsequent turns, the issue is not picked up again and hence, gives an indication that the decision has been updated. The topic shift by Sarah (line 300) shows that the topic is closed for further negotiation.

This instance shows that a decision made and ratified in the meeting has been updated a month later, after a discussion in another interactional context. Although it was decided collectively in the meeting, the decision can be altered at another time. Using her legitimate authority, Sarah announces the decision that she has arrived at after a discussion with the students, and without consulting other participants. In this case, it is fair to conclude that highly complex decisions could initially be made collectively and unilaterally decided upon by those with authority (see also Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). In comparison to Marra (2003: 17), who finds that complex decisions involve resistance over the dominance of more powerful members, both Examples 4.5 and 4.6 demonstrate that the authority figure dominates in the modifying decisions without any (explicit) contention from others. The analysis of two interactional contexts provides empirical evidence of the lengthy progression and intertextuality of DM processes between meetings and WA platform.

4.3 Discussion

This chapter has discussed the characteristics of the DM processes derived from the data and past literature, placing the various types of DM talk found in my data along a continuum. By looking at how participants formulate, negotiate and work towards reaching a decision, we can identify some of the processes, which range from simple to highly complex situations. By placing DM types on the continuum (Figure 4.1), the

findings indicate that characteristics of each category are not fixed but they overlap one another. The features that emerged from the data and past literature serve as an initial step towards characterising DM according to its discursive features. They are, undoubtedly, debatable, but hopefully they contribute to the growing body of work that move away from ideal framework of how decisions ought to be made.

One of the main findings worth pointing out is that the categories of DM processes aptly capture the ideas of previous scholars, namely that decisions are ephemeral, 'potentially short-lived and burdened with great uncertainty' (Halvorsen and Sarangi, 2015: 11) yet emerging and ubiquitous, and, 'should be placed in the context of a continuous stream...in a variety of settings' (Huisman, 2001: 76). The decisions are contingent upon work plans and situations, hence they are constantly open for further modifications and scrutiny – sometimes even across interactional contexts (Halvorsen and Sarangi, 2015). Therefore, the findings discussed here support the claim that 'the 'rationale' of a decision made in interaction is a socially situated construct of the interaction' (Huisman, 2001: 71). The fluid nature of decisions has important implications for research on DM as it addresses the crucial question: Where does a DM episode officially end? In responding to this enquiry, examinations of several significant contexts are essential to trace the emergence or alteration of decisions. I was lucky enough to be given access to two main, different contexts of DM in this team. Although in some places, DM processes may not be limited to other contexts such as emails, phone calls, or one-to-one interaction only, my data are capable of capturing the incremental progression of decisions in different settings – which is underrepresented in DM research, despite being incredibly relevant.

From the findings, we can draw connections between the role of DM and leadership. The complexity of DM helps us to identify what kind of leadership is being enacted, and who are involved in it, in relation to each of the processes. Referring to Examples 4.5 and 4.6, the analysis indicated that the final say often rests in the hands of the officially designated team leader or the HOD. Ratification is an activity that is bound to hierarchical identity (Angouri and Angelidou, 2012) hence it is expected for the chair or the formal leader to enact this activity. Decision modification, on the other, is not a category that is bound to hierarchy. Nonetheless, those who modify a

decision that has been reached, explicitly demonstrates their ownership on the decision and utmost authority in the DM process. In this case, it was Sarah and Zana who modified the decisions reached, hence this activity has reinforced their hierarchical standing and leadership in the team. In Example 4.1, an illustration of straightforward DM processes, I demonstrated that such processes are often dominated by respective individuals. Without needing to wait for responses from other members, the formal leaders could dominate the discussion and make the decision autonomously.

In fairly complex to highly complex processes of DM, we observed more collaborative work from the team. Ordinary members, such as Irene, Syahira and Wani, contributed significantly to the processes of achieving decisions. Not only that, they also managed to influence the discussions and facilitated the formal leader in shaping the decisions. In these cases, we observed the leadership dynamics in this team where, at certain points, the boundaries between different hierarchical positions were fluid, as was the formal leaders' prerogative roles in DM. These observations of DL roles thus strengthen the claim the DM is a prime site for leadership (Clifton, 2012) and that the DM typology processes reflect different strategies and dynamics of leadership. It is my aim in the next chapter to explore the leadership strategies in DM performed by the superiors of the TEFL team on a turn-by-turn basis as decisions are being made (Clifton, 2012, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017).

The DM types are one of the features that characterise this team. The lengthy processes, autonomous and collaborative effort in achieving decisions, different ways of ratification and decision modification, are some of the characteristics that reflect the team's acceptable practices in DM. It is also interesting to see that WA messages that are sent outside the core hours suggest mutual engagement within the team. During the interviews, none of the members indicated annoyance that they received messages outside of these hours, which implies that the practice is perceived as acceptable, hence ways of reinforce solidarity within the CofP.

The following chapter is a continuation of the discussion of the topic of DM with a more specific focus on the role played by those in the leadership positions, i.e. Sarah

and Zana. It explores in depth the link between leadership activities and DM processes.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to further explore the enactment of leadership by the legitimate leaders with a particular focus on the activities in DM processes. I begin this chapter with a brief description of the two participants, the formal leader, Sarah and the HOD, Zana, who are the key participants of leadership within the team. Because DM is one of the leaders' primary tasks (Clifton, 2009; Baxter, 2014), the instances presented in this chapter are thus specifically focused on how these leaders use their legitimate authority and negotiate leadership on a turn-by-turn basis. Using the dataset from the meetings and the WA group, several discourse strategies are identified through the DM activities by which decisions are made and leadership is performed

5.2 Leadership by Sarah and Zana

Both Sarah and Zana take on leadership roles in DM processes because of the positions that they hold within the TEFL team and in FAN. Sarah, who is the legitimate leader of the team and the designated chair, is expected to carry out most of the leadership roles and is ultimately accountable for the outcomes of the meetings. Based on the data, she fulfils duties that are expected of her as the formal leader and the chair. Her roles include chairing the meetings, structuring the overall turn-taking pattern performing DM activities such as initiating the issues, announcing the decisions, ratifying the suggestions and allocating tasks to the members. She also at times displays her epistemic primacy by proposing suggestions and reinforces her proposals in a strategic way by reformulating her proposals. These activities are all relevant to displaying leadership (Clifton, 2012, 2017; Choi and Schnurr, 2014; Holmes et al., 2014; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017).

Apart from Sarah, Zana too is authorised as a legitimate decision maker. While there are some variations in the micro-level enactment of roles, their overall leadership

responsibilities in DM are relatively similar. As the HOD with the most authority within the wider institutional context, Zana holds the highest position among the ordinary members at the departmental level, and therefore acts as the advisor within the boundaries of the team. Referring to the data that were recorded, Zana plays significant roles in the DM processes in which her opinions are often taken into account. On other occasions, she displays her expertise and has the final say in some of the decisions made in the meetings. The roles that she plays depict her as the one in charge of some of the decisions. At certain points of a discussion, she even overrules the decisions made by others.

The dataset shows that these leaders perform a variety of discourse strategies in influencing DM processes and subsequently, do leadership. The discourse strategies used by Sarah include the following: (a) repetitively summarising the decision, (b) claiming epistemic primacy, and (c) having private discussions with other members. Zana, on the other hand, is found to be enacting the following leadership discourse strategies: (d) modifying decisions that have been achieved, (e) expressing approval and claiming deontic authority, and (f) criticising the consensus arrived at by the ordinary members. In the analysis below, we can see this process in action through the analysis of meeting talk and WA interaction. The analysis is divided into two sections. The first section concerns the DM episodes in which Sarah plays crucial roles and displays her leadership, while the second section focuses on Zana.

The first example, discussed below, concerns Sarah. It shows how she repetitively summarises the decision in her effort to close negotiations and end the current topic of the discussion. This strategy is also done to subtly silencing one of the members who keeps reinforcing her proposal in a tedious way.

5.2.1 Sarah

Example 5.1: Repeatedly summarising the decision to silence a team member

Context: This interaction takes place in M4 where the participants discuss the traditional sweets to be served during a briefing with the school supervisors.^{13 14}

1. Eusof: >kuih menda se lagi?< akok (xxx)?
>what are the other traditional sweets?< akok (xxx)?

- NINE TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE THE PARTICIPANTS DISCUSS THE PROPOSAL BY EUSOF

10. Wani: = >eh buah lima cina< ni tahun baru >buah lima cina murah hok
//kecik kecil owh:::<\n
=>eh mandarin oranges< during Chinese New Year >mandarin oranges are cheap //the small ones:::<\n
11. Eusof: /mhm\\=
12. Irene: =boleh doh
=that should be fine
13. Wani: >buah lima kecil kecil owh?< ((looks at Sarah))
>the small mandarin oranges right?< ((looks at Sarah))
14. Sarah: OK je ((looks at Wani and nods)) >berape sangat dok:::< =
should be OK ((looks at Wani and nods)) not that expensive::: =
15. Wani: = >brape sen ngat:::<
= >not that expensive::: <
16. Eusof: (xxx)
17. Wani: >buah lima hok kecil kecil owh<=
>the small mandarin oranges<=
18. Sarah: =ha ((indicates agreement)) OK >sehat sehat sehat ((nods and points index finger to Wani)) OK sehat< =
= ha ((indicates agreement)) OK >healthy healthy healthy ((nods and points index finger to Wani)) OK healthy =
19. Wani: =hmm roti jala dengan lima =
= hmm net crepes and oranges =
20. Sarah: = lima //deh\\? ((looks at Wani))
= oranges //OK\\? ((looks at Wani))

¹³ Akok is a local traditional pudding and is commonly baked using a special brass mould that gives the pudding a sponge-like appearance. (<http://foodnframe.com/2012/02/kuih-akok-kelantan/>)

¹⁴ Net crepes are a popular traditional Malaysian dish that is often served during ceremonies

21. Wani: */>kuih pulak<\ (.) >pahtu teh o pulok <*
 />traditional sweets<\ (.) > with tea<
22. Sarah: *=lima cina::: ((writes notes))*
 mandarin oranges ((writes notes))
23. Wani: *= >balik sini kencing manis< =*
 = >maybe we will get diabetes< =
24. Sarah: *= >last limau cina< (.) ni OK bereh*
 = >last mandarin oranges< (.) OK done
25. Wani: *>limau cina kecil kecil owh:::< kan*
 >the small mandarin oranges:::< right

This extract is an instance of a fairly straightforward discussion with relatively short turns, two proposals (lines 10 and 19) and explicit ratification by Sarah. It is extracted from a longer interaction, in which Syahira keeps on proposing to add another traditional sweet during a TP briefing. Her initiation does not receive any responses from the floor. It is Eusof who re-proposes the topic which then leads Wani to propose an idea of buying oranges.

As it is Chinese New Year, oranges are cheaper. Wani emphasises this in favour of serving traditional sweets (line 10). In response to Wani's proposal, other participants show positive feedback towards her suggestion (Eusof and Irene, lines 11-12). This is done through minimal feedback *mhm* and a token of agreement by Irene, *that should be fine*. Although the responses strengthened the proposal, it is not until the proposal is validated by the formal leader or the HOD that it is perceived as a decision.

The second half of the extract (lines 14-25) clearly establishes Sarah's position as the formal leader. This boundary between the formal leader and the ordinary members is reflected through the expression of approval (nods in line 14) and a rapid ratification expression (OK in line 14). While indicating her agreement in response to Wani's reinforcement on the proposal, she speaks at a rapid pace, *OK >healthy healthy healthy OK healthy<* (line 18) and summarises that serving oranges is a healthy choice. Sarah too complements Wani's post with nodding and pointing her

index fingers to Wani, which conveys her acknowledgement of the proposal. In granting approval and ratifying the proposal, Sarah shows leadership and these activities make it clear that she is in charge of the decision.

In line 20, Sarah asks a clarifying question before she finalises the decision, *oranges //OK\?*, but she is interrupted with Wani's posts who seems to deviate from the focus of the discussion (lines 21 and 23). In line 22, Sarah shows ratification through noting down the decision and she brings the talk to an end (line 24). Sarah reinforces her agreement with Wani's proposal, mentioning, *>last mandarin oranges< (.) OK done* (line 24). At this point, she indicates that the topic is closed for negotiation. The lexical item, *last*, which also means 'final thing' in formal English, is significant as it explicitly signals the speaker's intention to end the negotiation and the current topic. The use of several OKs in her utterances (lines 18, 20 and 24) reflects her decisiveness and subtly informs others that the current topic of interest has been ratified. As confirmed by Marra (2003: 88), the discourse marker 'okay' is often used in decision ratification and to signal topic movement.

Sarah's final utterance (line 24) could be indicated as her effort to shut up certain participants and skilfully preventing a potentially time-wasting deviation in a subtle way. By summarising, ratifying and announcing the decision, Sarah exercises her prerogatives consistent with the preallocated roles of the chair (Marra, 2003). Not only that, her strategy of repeatedly summarising the discussion has helped her to maintain control over the discussion and exert influence over what has been agreed (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003; Schnurr, 2008). Holmes and Stubbe (2003) have similar findings of a chair who summarises regularly to prevent possibly time-consuming discussion. This instance also shows that it is acceptable in this CofP for the ordinary members to digress from a discussion, until at a certain point, the formal leader considers it has dallied long enough for the discussion. In my meeting dataset, the participants have shown numerous events of topic digression that possibly have caused the meetings to be unnecessarily longer than they should be. This is confirmed by Irene and Syahira during interviews, who claim that their team needs to improve on topic deviation so that they can have shorter meetings in the future.

Example 5.2 presents an instance of Sarah structuring the turn-taking patterns where she monitors the flow of the discussion. Also, she enacts leadership by claiming epistemic primacy and reformulating her proposal in order to get other participants to agree with her, which are activities that indexed leadership. Reformulating is ‘an attempt to challenge and guide the interlocutors towards a desired response’ (Van de Mierop and Schnurr, 2014: 12). In Van de Mierop and Schnurr’s (2014) study on gatekeeping, reformulating is done by the gatekeeper ‘whose aim is to ensure the goals of appraisal interview are being met’. Reformulating helps the interviewer manoeuvres the interview towards achieving ‘an institutionalisable answer’ and ‘creating certain organizational reality’ (ibid.). Similarly to this context, Sarah reformulates her proposal to obtain the desired decision for the topic discussed, as illustrated in the following example.

Example 5.2 Claiming epistemic primacy and reformulating the proposal

The participants are discussing the venues for conducting a reflection session with the TEFL students upon the completion of their TP. This interaction is an extract from M1.

1. Sarah: *so (.) so kita ambik (.) dua venue:: >kita sudah cepat< (.) dua venue kak Syahira owk? = ((looks at Syahira))*
so (.) we will book (.) two venues:: >we will finish early< (.) will two venues be enough kak Syahira? = ((looks at Syahira))
2. Syahira: = mhm ((nods and continues searching for a lesson plan on a computer))
3. Sarah: *kita amek dua venue(.) sebab 37 sekolah eh >cukup ↑ke dua ve↑nue<?*
we will book two venues (.) because there are 37 schools eh > are they enough ↑ are two ve↑nues enough? <?
4. Irene: erm?
5. Sarah: *>cukup ke dua venue 37 skolah eh?<*
>will two venues be enough for 37 schools eh?<
6. Irene: *buat dua venue macam hari tu sebab kita kene invite junior jugok*

- make it two venues like we did previously because we need to invite the juniors too
7. Sarah: *tapi dua >sekoloh ↑ni::: (.) eh eh eh< dua venue 37 (.) 37 ↑sekoloh ni*
but two > schools ↑here::: (.) eh eh eh< two venues there are 37 (.) 37 ↑ schools =
8. Irene: = *dah tiga ah //lambat kekgi*
= then three venues (the session) //may finish late\

APPROXIMATELY 15 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE THEY DISCUSS ADDING ANOTHER VENUE FOR THE SESSION

23. Irene: *venue dia kita buat venue A::: (.) library*
we will book venue A ::: (.) library
24. Sarah: *>venue A library < (.) se lagi venue B::: tolong jangan = ((laughs))*
>venue A library< (.) but for the other one please not at venue B:::= ((laughs))
25. Irene: = *venue A haritu kita dapat sembilan sembilan owk =*
= the other day we had nine nine (groups) at venue A right? =
26. Sarah: = *kelas OK je=*
= classrooms are OK too=
27. Irene: = *mhm ambik kelas ah satu lagi*
= yes book a classroom for another venue
28. Sarah: *kelas besar kalau kelas besar sikit (.) venue C dok leh projector dia dok comey =*
if we do it in classrooms choose bigger classrooms (.) venue C cannot be used as the projector there is not working =
29. Irene: = *dok pun kelas kat bangunan akademik=*
= what about the classrooms in the academic building =
30. Sarah: = *kelas kat bangunan akademik? =*
= classrooms in the academic building? =
31. Irene: (xxx)
32. Sarah: mhm mhm
33. Irene: *boleh je (xxx)*
should be fine (xxx)
34. Sarah: *jap (.) >↑tiga venue ke ni?< ke nak pat venue? =*
wait (.) >so is it ↑three venues?< or four venues? =

35. Irene: =*kalau pat jadi braper? 37 bahagi pat* =
=how many groups will be in four venues? 37 divided by four =
36. Sarah: = *malasnya nak bagi ((laughing voice))*
= I am too lazy to calculate ((laughing voice))((Irene and Eusof laugh))

APPROXIMATELY SEVEN TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE IRENE, EUSOF AND SARAH DO THE CALCULATION

43. Sarah: *rasanya pat venue ah owk? //lelah nak abis kak Syahira owk?* \ = ((looks at Syahira))
it is better to have four venues right? //it will take ages to finish right kak Syahira? \ = ((looks at Syahira))
44. Syahira: ((nods and continues her search for the lesson plan on a computer))
45. Irene: */pat venues malas nak dengar\ \ biasa (.) before twelve tu (.) kita settle lah?*
/four venues so tiring to watch all presentations\ \ usually (.) we will finish the session by 12 p.m. (.) lah?
46. Sarah: ((refers to her notes)) = *mhm:: jadi nine nine venue (.) nine nine nine //venue *
((refers to her notes)) = *mhm :: yes so nine nine venues (.) nine nine nine //venues \ =*
47. Irene: */jadi\ \ kalau venue A:: //library*
/so\ \ if venue A:: //library
48. Sarah: */ada se je\ \ lah sepuluh*
/there will be only one lah\ \ venue with ten groups
49. Irene: *>kalau semua kita buat kelas kat academic building?< =*
>what if we do them all in classrooms in the academic building? < =
50. Sarah: = ((writes down notes)) *jap eh (.) jadi ni 16 >bagi lecturer dulu< (.) lecturer satu (.) lecturer satu venue pat*
= ((writes down notes)) wait eh (.) so 16 >I am calculating the numbers of lecturers< (.) the lecturers (.) one venue will locate four lecturers
51. Irene: *cukup ah tu =*
that should be enough =

52. Sarah: =mhm::: cukup ah ((Irene backchannels)) so lecturer pat
pat pat pat >OK beres<
= mhm::: should be enough ((Irene backchannels)) so
lecturers four four four four >OK done<
53. Irene: //jadi academic building? ((nods))\
54. Sarah: /semua buat kat academic building belaker dakpe
((nods))\ =
/all sessions will be at the academic building that should
be fine ((nods)) \ =
55. Irene: = a ah ((indicates agreement)) kelas academic building
((writes notes))
= a ah ((indicates agreement)) classrooms in the academic
building ((writes notes))

Looking at the sequences of turns taken in this extract, the DM process in this excerpt could be best classified as fairly straightforward. The turns are slightly longer but they are still within neat turn sequences (issue-proposal-proposal of implementation-ratification). The DM process is supplemented by the presence of more than one proposal, and a ratification that is done through verbal and non-verbal cue, i.e. summary and nodding by Sarah (line 54).

At this point in the interaction, Sarah and Irene are discussing the venues in which to conduct the reflection session after they have agreed on the date for the event. A reflection session is an interactive gathering for the students to share their experience during the TP and this is usually done in a form of oral presentations. Due to the large number of students involved, it is expected that there would be more presentations to be assessed and so, adding more venues will accelerate the running of the sessions. Consistent with her role as the chair and also the formal leader, Sarah initiates the discussion about the venues to conduct the reflection session, proposes holding it at two venues (line 1) but later expresses her concern that the session may end late. In her turn, Sarah attempts to elicit responses from other participants by repeatedly raising her doubts in the form of questions about having just two venues (lines 3 and 5).

Against this background, Sarah claims epistemic primacy by evaluating the proposal, mentioning that the session may be time-consuming. Sarah appears as the first speaker to produce an assessment of the situation by forecasting the potential problem that the team will be experiencing, i.e. not having adequate venues for the sessions. By claiming epistemic primacy, she also establishes a context in which the interlocutor could either agree or disagree (Heritage, 2002). 'In such a context, respondents may be vulnerable to the inference that their response is fabricated on the instant to achieve agreement or disagreement, and is thus a dependent or even a coerced action within a field of constraint that is established by the first' (ibid.: 7). In other words, Irene is obligated to provide a response to Sarah's query, either to comply or resist. We could say that Irene is constrained to providing desired responses as required by Sarah. This could be strengthened by Sarah's multiple attempts to reformulate her proposals (lines 3, 5 and 7) to gain Irene's alignment with her main concerns (inadequate venues for the sessions). In line with Puchta and Potter (1999), the authors claim that reformulations and rewordings, and elaborate questions manage to provide the desired answers in focus groups' discussions (see also Van de Mierop and Schnurr, 2014). With the three attempts in reformulating and evaluating the practicality of just having two venues, Sarah ensures that she gains the desired response, i.e. conducting the session at more than two venues. She controls the access to the next step and only moves the discussion forward after receiving explicit support from Irene.

Irene, on the other hand, appears to be the second person to assess the situation, where she goes with the flow, accepts Sarah's management of meaning and makes a proposal according to Sarah's concern (line 8). This proposal about using three venues, which turns into a decision, finally corresponds to the main problem that Sarah has been raising throughout her earlier posts. At this point, we could argue that the decision is owned by Irene since it is her proposal that is advanced into a decision.

Yet, Sarah's constant reinforcement in getting Irene's alignment establishes her position as the co-author of the proposal. The proposal would not have been proposed without her influence, and so it makes sense to attribute the ownership of

the proposal to Sarah too. As such, this exemplifies what Clifton (2017) finds in his study on collaborative effort, where the participants co-author the proposal by aligning themselves with the retrospective suggestion. Asmuß and Oshima (2012: 77), instead, claim that their participant, who obtains agreement from the co-participant, 're-establishes his positions as the proposal initiator and fully owns the proper solution to the problem as his own'. Based on Clifton's and Asmuß and Oshima's claims, it is appropriate to acknowledge the decision as a collaborative effort by Sarah and Irene, in which the formal leader exerts influence to gain compliance from her subordinate. Part of the decision is a result of Sarah's reformulation of her questions and her structuring of turns in gaining a desired decision.

In line 26, Sarah leads the team to the proposal of implementation by suggesting everyday classrooms as potential venues. Sarah evaluates and compares a venue to one another (line 28) and she appears (again) as the first to evaluate the situation. Sarah claims epistemic primacy by recalling the past reflection session and indicates her knowledge and experience in choosing the right venue.

After Irene and Sarah seem to come to a consensus to conduct the session in academic buildings, the main location where everyday classes are held, Sarah then raises another concern about whether they need to add another venue (line 34). Despite having reached a consensus on having three venues, Sarah's concern about adding more rooms impedes the discussion progressing to the next level. Again, she controls the progress of the discussion, but in this phase Irene does not immediately agree with her, but evaluates her proposal by asking for clarification (line 35). Irene's query requires Sarah to do a simple calculation, but Sarah jokingly refuses to do so. Sarah's comment, '*I am too lazy to calculate*' (line 36) implicitly positions herself as one with more status and her reluctance to align with Irene. Upon hearing Sarah's humorous sequence, Irene initiates the calculation that is further facilitated by Eusof, and also Sarah.

Lines 49-55 show Sarah and Irene's collaborative work in reaching decisions. While Irene suggests academic buildings as the venues (lines 49 and 53), Sarah provides

approval on the proposal of implementation (line 54). Sarah ratifies the proposal through nodding (line 54) and the decision is reinforced by Irene's act of writing down the decision (line 55).

Of particular interest in the DM process displayed in this example is the way in which Sarah involves the participation of the other members of the group. She does not only let Irene co-navigate the interaction, but also acknowledges Syahira's position in her turns (lines 1 and 43). While Sarah introduces the problem that they may face with a limited number of venues, Irene, on the other hand, formulates suggestions to address Sarah's concern. Irene shows her followership by providing relevant proposals to the issue. According to Clifton (2012, 2017), such acts are examples of following the lead of the prior speaker and accepting their management of meaning. All contributions not only align with each other, but also indicate affirmative and collaborative effort by both of them. Sarah enacts leadership by providing space for others to negotiate and considering the opinion of the senior member, but at the same time dominating the discussion. Speech acts, such as reformulating her questions, claiming epistemic primacy, co-authoring the proposal and announcing the decision have helped Sarah to manage organisational meaning and these activities are tantamount to leadership (Clifton, 2006, 2012; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Van de Mierop and Schnurr, 2014).

In many instances in the WA, Sarah continuously demonstrates her leadership within the team by owning the final say of the decision. Example 5.3 illustrates an instance of Sarah managing the DM process by having private discussions with Eusof, i.e. the member who is greatly affected by the issues raised.

Example 5.3: Having private discussions with other participants

Context: In this extract, the participants discuss an important issue involving one of the schools participating in the TP. The team was informed by their students that School B does not allocate sufficient teaching hours and has assigned the trainee students to teach other subjects than English Language, which are contradictory to the TP's policy. This issue is raised by Sarah and it is participated in by Eusof, Irene

and Wani. Since it is urgent, the issue is discussed outside core working hours. It also takes the longest duration of time and the most posts of all the WA discussions in the data. As a result of the discussion, the participants (except Zana and Syahira) reach a consensus on assigning Eusof to visit the school.

- 1628) 14/02/2016, 9:02 pm - Irene: *kalo eusof xde masa, irene bole p school C. tu pn kalo school B x nk simpan ank2 kte la*
if Eusof could not make it, I could visit School C. if only School B does not want our students la
- 1629) 14/02/2016, 9:02 pm - Wani: *kita buat surat tambahan pelajar jer. Sek ok, jpn ok*
we write a letter informing additional students only. If school is OK, the education state department will be OK too
- 1630) 14/02/2016, 9:04 pm - Wani: *Irene confirm dulu dgn School C esok. Irene confirms with School C first tomorrow.*
- 1631) 14/02/2016, 9:05 pm - Irene: Before tu eusof kne confirm dlu ngan School B
Before that Eusof needs to confirm with School B

29 TURNS ARE OMITTED IN WHICH THE PARTICIPANTS LAUGHS AT EUSOF'S JOKE AND ZANA JOINS THE DISCUSSION

- 1659) 15/02/2016, 6:57 am - Sarah: *Smlm discuss dgn eusof. Strategi : nak g brief pasal file dan explain lah sikit2. Masalah : file ada dalam bilik kakzana & eusof xleh g tgn kosong gitu. Kalu Eusof g amik file kat opes then go back to school, he ll miss the meeting. Option : saya volunteer pegi lepas amik file dari bilik kakzana.*

*Sy pon kena g school B sbb budak2
kita bgtau deputy headmaster dia nak
surat dr kita. Pening sungguh*

Last night discussed with Eusof.
Strategy: need to brief about filings
and do a little bit of explanation.
Problem : file is in kak Zana's room &
Eusof cannot go to the school without
it. If Eusof collects the file from the
office then goes to the school, he'll
miss the meeting. Option: I've
volunteered to go to the school and
collect the file from kak Zana's room.
Then I need to go to school B because
our students said that the deputy
headmaster needs a letter from us. So
enervating

1660) 15/02/2016, 7:12 am - Wani:

*Dok kira lah saper gi, asal settle isu2
ni, ok jer.* 🍌🍌🍌

Doesn't matter who goes, as long as
the issues are settled, that should be
OK 🍌🍌🍌

During the discussion above, Sarah is away while the members (except for Zana and Syahira) have decided that Eusof will visit the school despite his busy schedule. They have come to the conclusion that Eusof will update the team after his visit and Irene will find an alternative school to place the affected students (lines 1628-1631). At this point, the participants give directives to each other and they appear to have a 'jointly constructed thinking process' (Baxter, 2014: 437). Baxter illustrates this process through the evidence of latching, simultaneous talk and prompt questions. In virtual communication, such as the WA, latching could be indicated by prompt responses (based on the close time stamps between each post) between the ordinary members. Despite the absence of their officially designated leader, Sarah, the ordinary members manage to do the leading and reach a consensus (lines 1628-1631). However, a day later, after approximately 40 posts following Sarah's last message,

Sarah gets back to the team and summarises the consensus that she has reached with Eusof through their private discussion on WA.

While others thought that Eusof would be visiting the school, Sarah informs the team that she will be taking responsibility as Eusof will be occupied with meetings on the same day. In her post, Sarah mentions 'option: I've volunteered to go to the school after collecting the file from kak Zana's room' (line 1659). Typically, the word 'option' indicates that the addressee is given the freedom or right to choose the potential decisions. However, in this context of unequal hierarchical authority, such is not always the case. While her messages appear diplomatic and convey her genuine intention when reporting the summary of the discussion she had with Eusof, Sarah however, implicitly enacts her authority by not giving options from which the members could choose – rather, they are told of the decision that has been decided between her and Eusof (i.e. Sarah will visit the school) (line 1659). At this point, we could deduce that Sarah has the final say over the decision, although the members have collectively agreed on a different decision (i.e. Eusof to visit the school). The implicit enactment of authority can be substantiated from Schnurr and Mak's (2011) study. Their findings illustrate that the use of an exclamation 'please' in a superior's message indicates that people do not have an option but to comply with the leader.

Subsequently, Wani's post and the emoji of hand sign OK presumably indicate support for Sarah's decision. Wani's post may be argued to be a ratification for the decision when she mentions, '*Doesn't matter who goes, as long as the issues are settled, that should be OK* 🍑🍑🍑' (line 1660). This could be seen from the use of the discourse marker of ratification 'OK' in her message (Marra, 2003) and the emoji that significantly imply a positive response. Nevertheless, the post could also be seen as having an obviously ironic intent in responding to Sarah's decision, in which the group is not given other options than to agree with Sarah's final say. The triple emoji may also be implied as an implicit sarcastic comment regarding Sarah's decision as she has disregarded the consensus reached prior to her decision announcement. Because digital communication lacks audiovisual cues, it is

challenging for analysts to determine the closest interpretation and possible intentions of the emoji sent by the senders.

The silence (after Wani's post), on the other hand, 'may not necessarily be interpreted as explicit consent, but also could be a signal that there is nothing more to add, no questions unanswered and no information held back' (Halvorsen and Sarangi, 2015: 10). Sarah's messages, which are more like a 'sticky-note' (Darics, 2016: 69) or a ready-made decision (Clifton, 2008), may not seem to invite further negotiation as their formal leader has spoken and has left them with a decision. Since Eusof is assigned to visit the school, he is the person with whom Sarah needs to make a decision. The example demonstrates authoritative moves by Sarah in excluding others in the discussion and overriding the consensus that the ordinary members have achieved while she was away. In this example, although she appears to seek confirmation from others, her post is merely a report of the decision, in which it has been finalised and is non-negotiable.

This example demonstrates that some decisions in this CofP can be made without having all members contribute to them and the outcome of the discussion is usually complied with by those who are excluded from the private discussion. Although the ordinary members may have signalled dissatisfaction for such 'unwarranted' decisions through the use of emoji or silence, it seems that this has been overruled by the authority of the formal leader. The unilateral decisions occurred in WA indicate the shared practices of the team's CofP acceptable workplace norms.

Previous instances have reflected Sarah's ways of taking up leadership within the team. Such examples provide evidence that it is usually the leader who ratifies and announces the decision, and this is in line with previous studies which show that these activities are the prerogative of the formal leaders (Marra, 2003; Clifton, 2009; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012). It is fair then to conclude that the leader often owns the final say in decision, regardless of what have been achieved previously.

The subsequent section presents examples of how Zana, who is the HOD in FAN, enacts her leadership within the context of DM. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Zana is

not an official member in the team but as the HOD, she has the right to be informed of all decisions made within the scope of the TEFL team's tasks. During the interview session, Sarah claims, 'whatever decisions being made in the meetings we need to ask her::: so that's why it is better for us to just invite her' and the '...final decision will be (.) will come from her kak Zana...'. Sarah's claims on Zana legitimise Zana's authority as the one who has the most authority over the decisions made in the TEFL team.

5.2.2 Zana

Zana is regarded as an advisor (as termed by Irene during the interview) to the team and she is often consulted by the team for decisions reached without her involvement. In meetings and WA, she frequently contributes to the discussions and sometimes overrules the DM processes. One of the ways in which she achieves this is by modifying decisions that the team has already collectively formed, as illustrated in Example 5.4.

Example 5.4: Modifying the collective decision

Context: This discussion is taken from M1, in which Zana brings up the topic about making calls to the schools in Bukit. The rest of the participants, on the other hand, are talking about other issues that they had faced in the previous TP.

473. Zana: = *OK hok hok list yang call sekolah tu wi ke Wani before kita::: ((laughs)) ganti dia ((laughs))*
 OK the the list of schools that we need to call give it to Wani before we::: ((laughs)) replace her ((laughs))
474. Syahira: ((looks at Zana with a confused face)) list (.) list (.) =
475. Sarah: =//*hok call Bukit owh:::*
 = //the Bukit list:::\
476. Zana: = /*list hok\\ telefon Bukit owh sebab dia committee //kita:::*
give me the list I ask her to do it ((looks at Irene))
 = /the\\ Bukit's list because she is still in //our:::\ committee
give me the list I ask her to do it ((looks at Irene))
477. Irene: /a:::\ OK ((writes notes))

This example demonstrates a highly complex DM process that is dominated by Zana. It is categorised as highly complex because it shows a modification of a decision to which the team had already come (see also Chapter 4, Example 4.5). The decision is to appoint a colleague to perform a task of informing schools in Bukit, regarding the cancellation of involving them in the TP programme. This extract demonstrates the phase where Zana attempts to modify the decision while other members discuss the current agenda of the meeting.

While Sarah is about to summarise the ongoing discussion, she is interrupted by Zana and the interruption subsequently changes the direction of the discussion (line 1). Deviating from the current discussion, Zana brings back the topic about making calls to schools in Bukit and claims that the task could be done by somebody else, i.e. Wani (line 2), and announces to them that the task will be Wani's final assignment before Wani leaves the team. The lexical item 'OK...' in Zana's utterance signifies several structural markers. One of the functions is to signal topic transition and that a new topic is about to start (Schleef, 2008). In this case, 'OK' may indicate that Sarah's turn has ended and is an attention-getter in Zana's attempt to grab the participants' attention who, at that time are discussing another topic (Schleef, 2008). Not only has she successfully gained the members' attention on her upcoming turn, Zana also appears to claim superiority as the person with the utmost authority in the group when she changes the direction of the discussion.

What is noteworthy about Zana's interactional style is the use of pronouns. In her turn, instead of utilising the first person singular pronoun 'I', she utilises the more inclusive first-person plural 'we', which includes all team members and indicates the collective effort involved in the implementation of her suggestion. Despite that, it could be argued that the pronoun is non-generic and may exclusively refer to her institutional status having authority to issue directives to any members in FAN. This pronoun and the laughter downplay her directive and de-emphasise the status and power distance between her (as the person with most authority in the team) and the

other members (Holmes et al., 2011). Through this strategy, the decision is portrayed as a joint effort rather than Zana overrules the decision by herself.

Syahira seems perplexed, as shown through her confused face and her turn that attempts to recall the *'list'* that Zana is referring to (line 3). Further context is then provided by Sarah who clarifies the specific lists they are talking about, namely the *'Bukit list'* (line 4). In line 5, Zana reinforces her proposal by convincing the floor that it is appropriate to hand over the task to Wani since, at this point in time, she is still part of the committee. Here, Zana makes her status apparent through the choice of pronoun *'me'*. The pronoun that accompanies the directive *'...give me the list...'* is directed to Irene (line 5) and demonstrates her authority as the one who has the ultimate authority of delegating tasks to other people. At this stage, there is no further negotiation being made, and Zana subsequently indicates that a decision has been reached. Irene's turn seems to function not so much as a ratification but rather as a token of acknowledgement and acceptance to execute the decision. The discussion is thereby brought to a close.

The analysis presents the enactment of authority by Zana by modifying the decision that had previously been agreed on by the floor. In this example, Zana establishes leadership by modifying the decision that the team has achieved previously. She has the final say, and with the institutional status that she holds, is able to impose her authority by giving directives to Irene and allocating tasks to Wani without having the need to receive opinions from the team. Acknowledging these speech acts, Zana manages and instructs her subordinates and performs leadership in a direct and autonomous manner. The DM is done harmoniously without any explicit challenge from the team, although Zana interrupts and moves the topic of the current discussion. Zana's act of modifying the decision supports the claim by Marra (2003) that leaders can claim legitimate authority by overthrowing any decisions that have been achieved. What is distinctive about Zana's and Sarah's leadership roles is that Zana makes the decision unilaterally. Meanwhile Sarah still had a discussion with a person concerned with the issue at hand before announcing the decision to the group (Example 5.3). This situation posits a view that Zana's position in FAN

influences her leadership in the TEFL team and at times, this position overrides the authority of the formal leader.

Example 5.5 illustrates Zana's position more apparently as the one who has more authority than Sarah, when Sarah herself seeks approval from Zana about a decision that the team is about to make.

Example 5.5: Expressing approval

Context: Zana, who was absent from the meeting due to a workshop she had to attend, enters the meeting room while the discussion on confirming the dates for the students' SOP is going on. After she is joyfully greeted by the participants, she goes to the washroom and later returns to the meeting room. The interaction takes place in M3.

1. Zana: yes?
2. Sarah: *gini:: ((cheerfully welcoming Zana)) >gini boss gini boss< (.) tarikh SOP haritu kita agreed dah 10 11 (.) lapan sembilan ni raya ci↑na =*
like this:: ((cheerfully welcoming Zana)) >like this boss like this< (.) previously we have agreed on the SOP dates 10th 11th (.) 8th 9th will be Chi↑nese New Year =
3. Zana: = >hmm hmm<
4. Sarah: *jadi takut ada kapit cuti (.) cuti dia kapit Sarah takut sekolah tu ambik ni (.) jadi kita tokleh lah kata nak buat SOP (.) lepas budak exam dok leh owk? tak tak tak sesuai sebab*
we're just concerned that there will be long holidays (.) holidays the holidays are within the same week as working days (.) my main concern is some schools may have taken a week off for the holidays (.) so we cannot conduct the SOP lah after the exam? Not not not appropriate because
- SILENCE
5. Zana: *SOP ni dia dia dalam (xxx)=*
the SOP it is in (xxx) =
6. Sarah: = ha:::= ((shows agreement))

7. Zana: = *kalau dia gi sekolah tu should anything happen*
= if they go to the school and should anything happen
8. Sarah: *ha ((shows agreement)) ye lah kak Syahira brief dah //tadi*
ha ((shows agreement)) yes lah kak Syahira already briefed us
//just now
9. Syahira: */hm hm hm\\ =*
10. Zana: = *sebab mungkin budak register=*
= because maybe it falls on the registration day =
11. Sarah: =*ha::: a::: a::: ((shows agreement))*
12. Zana: *tu lah masalahnya*
that is the problem
13. Sarah: *tapi kita stick tu je lah deh kak Zana eh? ((Zana nods)) pahtu*
mungkin kita akan bagi briefing ke::: masa kita briefing
dengan cikgu kakgi la kita cuba dapat maklumat skolah ane
hok 37 ni [↑](.) yang yang =
but we stick to the same dates lah kak Zana eh? ((Zana nods))
and then maybe we will give a briefing or we will try to collect
the information during the briefing with the teachers later lah
which amongst these 37 schools [↑](.) that that =
14. Zana: = *ha ((shows agreement)) ha by next year tahu dah owk yang*
skolah mana nak cuti (.) //extra
= *ha ((shows agreement)) ha by next year we should know the*
schools that take extra (.) //holidays\
15. Sarah: */mhm mhm\\ mhm*
SILENCE
16. Zana: *I gi buat kerja dulu ah (xxx) ((goes to the main office))*
I am going to do work now (xxx) ((goes to the main office))
17. Sarah: *ha ((shows agreement)) senang gok nak cari kak Zana OK*
ha ((shows agreement)) should be easy to find you OK

Sarah, who once searched for Zana during the meeting, welcomes her with the title 'boss' (line 2) and quickly reports the dates that they had decided on when she returns from the washroom. By applying the title form 'boss' to Zana, Sarah is placing Zana as the person with the highest position within the team after herself and hence downplaying her status as the head of the team.

In the following turn, Sarah describes in detail the dilemma that they face in determining the dates for the SOP. SOP is a programme that aims to provide early exposure of the school environment to trainee teachers. The team is concerned about the dates that they have planned and they are expecting that several schools may be closed for the festive holidays (lines 2 and 4). In line 4, Sarah does not complete her turn, but after a brief silence, it could be assumed that Zana understands the meaning that Sarah wants to convey. The same situation is observed in the next lines where Zana makes contributions with regard to the students' SOP (lines 5, 7 and 10). In these lines, the responses given by Zana are equally short and fact-oriented yet incomplete. Albeit, Sarah seems to understand the messages that Zana tries to convey through her minimal backchannelling and completion of Zana's turns. Zana's flat voice and her short turns are also a reflection of her authority, in which she implicitly shows that she need not provide a longer explanation to Sarah. All her short turns (lines 5, 7 and 10) reflect her claims on epistemic primacy for the consensus reported to her. In line 7, she provides a consequence of the consensus the team has achieved, and in line 10, she judges that the dates they have chosen may overlap with the schools' registration day.

Sarah shows agreement on Zana's evaluation (line 11) and she further convinces Zana to retain the dates that the team had previously agreed on, and suggests an implementation to resolve their concerns. According to Sarah, they could verify the information on school holidays during a briefing with the schools involved in TP. In this sequence of turns, Sarah influences Zana to agree with her and seeks confirmation from Zana by using a local, colloquial tag question '*eh*'. Similar to New Zealand contexts, the pragmatic particle '*eh*' indexes informality and signals in-group membership (Holmes et al., 2011). Though Sarah is explicit in her turn in getting Zana aligned with the proposal, the use of hedging '*maybe*' and a salient Malaysian particle '*lah*' has helped her appear less demanding. With these discourse markers, Sarah shows deference in her contribution when reporting to and seeking approval from Zana.

It is towards the end of the meeting that Zana's position as HOD and the one who has the most authority in the decision is seen more prominently. Zana shows her

approval of the proposal and states that they should be getting this information at the beginning of the new year (line 14). Her turn then leads to a brief silence. She endorses Sarah's proposal by mentioning 'ha' and indicates her agreement. In this case, the lexical item is utilised to indicate the realisation that the proposal is reasonably practicable. Zana's contribution is vital, as she grants approval on the decision and subsequently this indicates the moment a decision is validated.

Although she is away from the meeting, her approval is needed before the team takes the decision to a next level. In this sequence, she establishes leadership by endorsing the proposal and ratifying the decision that the team has achieved. Zana moves the attention of the discussion by mentioning that she needs to do her work (line 16), which also implicitly indicates that she is done with the discussion. This final phase of the extract where one shifts the current topic could also be a reference point that a decision has been reached.

This is a significant instance that shows that – in some instances at least – Zana's authority within an institutional setting is greater than the formally appointed leader. Although Zana's contributions are mostly minimal and incomplete, she claims epistemic primacy by judging the situation that the team may have to face later on. Giving approval is another speech act associated with those in authority (Marra, 2003). Sarah's act of reporting and seeking approval illustrates that Zana has the final say on the decision and legitimises Zana's leadership. This instance shows that Sarah is aware that she does not have full authority to make every decision for the team. Not only that Zana shows that she has the knowledge over this issue, the fact that Sarah asks for her opinion demonstrates that she has control over several decisions in the TEFL team.

This situation thus suggests that leadership is enacted on two levels. While Sarah has all the power within the smaller context, she still needs to report to and gain approval from Zana, who is the highest status member in the team and a legitimate leader in a wider context.

Apart from meetings, Zana also performs her leadership in the discussions when using the WA. Example 5.6 presents Zana's enactment of leadership in a slightly more complex way than in the meetings. In this example, Zana claims deontic authority, in which the activity refers to 'determining how the world ought to be' (Stevanovic and Peräkylä, 2012: 298). This speech act, although appearing authoritative, can be acquiesced to or resisted (ibid.).

Example 5.6: Criticising the consensus achieved

Context: This exchange is a short excerpt taken from a longer conversation in the WA group. This excerpt shows how Zana criticises the team's consensus on assigning Eusof to visit School B. The consensus between the team members is reached before Zana joins the discussion.

- 1646) 14/02/2016, 10:17 pm - Zana: elloooo!!
- 1647) 14/02/2016, 10:17 pm - Zana: *bru bole lyn wasap*
I just got the chance to look at wasap
- 1648) 14/02/2016, 10:17 pm - Zana: *140 mesej!! mmg soheh grup ni penuh kontroversi*
140 messages!! It is certain that this group is controversial
- 1649) 14/02/2016, 10:18 pm - Zana: *kita x leh dgr dri stdnts jer*
we cannot hear from the stdnts only
- 1650) 14/02/2016, 10:18 pm - Zana: find out properly
- 1651) 14/02/2016, 10:19 pm - Zana: sometimes, thngs likeths can be blown out of proportion!!
- 1652) 14/02/2016, 10:19 pm - Zana: be rationale people!! 😊😊
- 1653) 14/02/2016, 10:49 pm - Wani: 👍👍👍
- 1654) 14/02/2016, 10:53 pm - Zana: *klu mmg betul citer ni, bru kita gi ganyang GB ramai2*
if this story is real, then we will 'beat up' the headmaster together
- 1655) 14/02/2016, 10:54 pm - Wani: Dr. Eusof will investigate...
- 1656) 14/02/2016, 10:55 pm - Zana: sherlock Holmesn
- 1657) 14/02/2016, 11:20 pm - Eusof: 😭
- 1658) 15/02/2016, 6:48 am - Sarah: Heheheh

1659) 15/02/2016, 6:57 am - Sarah: *Smlm discuss dgn eusof. Strategi : nak g brief pasal file dan explain lah sikit2. Masalah : file ada dalam bilik kakzana & eusof xleh g tgn kosong gitu. Kalu Eusof g amik file kat opes then go back to school, he ll miss the meeting. Option : saya volunteer pegi lepas amik file dari bilik kakzana. Sy pon kena g school B sbb budak2 kita bgtau deputy headmaster dia nak surat dr kita. Pening sungguh*

Last night discussed with Eusof. Strategy: need to brief about filings and do a little bit of explanation. Problem : file is in kakzana's room & Eusof cannot go to school without it. If Eusof collects the file at the office then goes back to school, he'll miss the meeting. Option : I've volunteered to go to the school after collecting the file from kakzana's room.

Then I need to go to school B because our students said that the deputy headmaster needs a letter from us. So enervating

Approximately four hours after the issue is being initiated and discussed, Zana greets everyone and directly criticises the team for making decisions without verifying the news and laments that the group is 'controversial' (line 1648). She condemns the team for merely relying on students' complaints and tells them to act rationally (lines 1649-1652). By telling others what they should be doing, Zana claims deontic authority, and positions herself as the one who has the right to determine others' future actions. Her criticisms do not receive immediate feedback until 20 minutes later, Wani briefly replies with triple emoticons of thumbs up. As indicated in Example 5.3, the emoji are rather ambiguous, as they may indicate the semantic connotation of compliance or implicit satirical intent of nonconformity. Zana further

directs a tongue-in-cheek reply, mentioning that they could collaboratively ‘beat up’ the headmaster if the issue is authentic. Although she does not attenuate the claim on aggressive confrontation with the headmaster, the team generally understands that Zana’s post is clearly humorous. With the word ‘*together*’ (line 1654), the humour could be implied as her support and in-group solidarity towards the team’s disappointment in respect of the issue, thus mitigating the previous criticisms. Wani responds to the posts and states that Eusof will ‘investigate’ the matter (line 1655). Significant here is the use of the word ‘investigate’, which corresponds to Zana’s criticisms of them for not clarifying the issue. The word may indirectly show compliance or sarcastic remark with Zana’s directives about consulting the respective school on the issue (lines 1650-1652). Following Wani’s post, Zana directs more humour, stating that Eusof will impersonate a famous fictional detective character, Sherlock Holmes (line 1656). Although he is directed as being the butt of the humour, Eusof indicates a positive response through an emoji of laughing hard until it is crying 😂 (line 1657). Sarah, although she responds on the next day (line 1658), produces some orthographic laughter. She then reports to the team about the backstage discussion that she had with Eusof and announces the decision they have reached (see Example 5.3).

Although Zana did not have the final word in the decision, such criticisms and claims for deontic authority considerably display that she has more authority than other members. Through these speech acts, Zana performs leadership. Her interruption of the discussion may be interpreted as an authoritative act, and the gap of the time stamps in between her posts and other members suggests the evidential value of her authority. Despite her absence during the previous 1645 posts, Zana still manages to exert her influence and undertakes leadership in the later stage of the discussion.

Apart from humour, Zana’s blunt deontic authority is mitigated through several CMC cues. This could be seen from the greeting of the incomplete spelling of the greeting ‘ellooo!!’ (line 1646), the repetition of the exclamation marks ‘140 messages!!’ ‘*be rationale people!!*’ (lines 1646, 1648 and 1652) and smiley emoticons that she attaches at the end of one of her directives (line 1652). These linguistic acts signal

her 'emotional involvement, the signalling of her thinking process, uptake of information and informality communication' that gives an impression of 'positive cordial communication' (Darics, 2017: 13). They verify what Darics (2017) shows in her study, i.e. that these linguistic acts reduce the status discrepancy among the participants and add to the creation of a relaxed atmosphere and collegiality. Zana's leadership enactment here appears to be twofold. Her directives and criticisms carry leadership force and facilitate her positioning of herself as a legitimate leader. Yet, the solidarity that she shows portrays her like a mother who supports and advises her subordinates, although she does it humorously. Such behaviours are typically demonstrated by female leaders who act like a mother with 'care-giving authority' (Baxter, 2012: 95).

5.3 Decision-making and leadership displayed by Sarah and Zana

In line with previous research, this chapter has shown that leaders at different levels of the organisational hierarchy do leadership in DM processes (Holmes et al., 2014; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). Across the data, I found evidence that these leaders utilise several discourse strategies that are associated with leadership, including repeatedly summarising the decision to silence members (Example 5.1), claiming epistemic and deontic authority (Examples 5.2, 5.5 and 5.6), excluding the voices of other participants (Example 5.3), modifying the decision (Example 5.4), expressing approval (Example 5.5) and criticising the consensus reached by ordinary members (Example 5.6).

As this chapter has illustrated, Sarah performed her leader's authority in various ways. Such instances could be seen when Sarah constantly established herself as the ratifier and announcer of the decisions. By performing these roles, Sarah had the final say on most of the decisions and secured her position as the one in charge. In light of Clifton's (2009) observation that decision ratification is category-bound right to the chair and the formal leader, it is unsurprising, in fact, it is expected, for Sarah to perform these roles. Angouri and Angelidou (2012), in their study on DM in a small firm context, also find that the manager of the team is the one who ratified the decisions.

There were also situations where Sarah strategically employed less authoritative strategies in deference to the active roles played by other members (Example 5.2). Although she appeared to be less dominating, Sarah still enacted her leadership by structuring the turn-taking patterns by manoeuvring the discussion according to her desired decisions. Her effort in getting other members to align and propose a suggestion in accordance with her own positioned herself as the co-author of the proposals. This is aligned with the findings by Clifton (2017: 65) on DL that 'displaying the same stance' showed that the interactants were 'acting as a team and so [were] the co-authors of the proposal'.

Sarah also performed similar responsibilities as the formal leader and chair in a seamless thread context, i.e. the WA group. Example 5.3 showed Sarah made an authoritative move when she had a private discussion with important people concerning the issue raised and dismissed the retrospective consensus the team had reached. In this instance, she highlighted her need to be assertive and to manifest her authority in particular circumstances. Notwithstanding, Sarah did not always appear to be decisive both in meetings and the WA group but she often invited other members' opinions before she proceeded to a decision.

Sarah's position as the formal leader did not remain static but was negotiated constantly with Zana. As the designated leader of the team, Sarah still needed to comply with Zana before she moved to potential (if not final) decisions. Such situations could be observed in Example 5.5, where Sarah reported to Zana on the decision that the team made while Zana was away from the meeting. Her behaviour of reporting the decision and seeking approval represented her legitimising Zana's authority as the highest status member of the team. This instance also showed Zana claiming leadership by epistemic primacy through her judgement of the decision made by the team members (Clifton, 2009, 2017; Asmuß and Oshima, 2012).

Modifying the decision that was ratified earlier is presumably the most authoritative speech act in DM, as only those with legitimate authority were found to be doing it. In Example 5.4, Zana abruptly moved onto a different topic during the ongoing discussion and changed the decision, although it had been achieved collectively. Such

authoritative moves did not occur in face-to-face interactions only, as they were also found within the WA discussions. In Example 5.6, Zana criticised the team's action and claimed deontic authority on the consensus that the team reached without her presence. Although Zana did not succeed in exerting influence over the decision, the fact that Zana criticised the team members for the potential decisions they have collectively made – which is an activity that is highly associated with leadership – demonstrated her ultimate authority within the team. In Chapter 4 (Example 4.6), I also demonstrated Sarah's enactment of leadership when she modified the decision reached in the meeting when she revisited the topic in the WA group. The behaviours are ascribed to authority and control and they illustrate how the formal leaders established leadership and superseded other's opinion on the decisions.

In answering the concern of ownership that I have raised in Chapter 2, I align with Clifton (2017) that attributing ownership of decisions is not a clear-cut or an easy endeavour. Based on examples shown, it is clear that most of the decisions were not the effort of an individual, but rather they were constructed with different views from the participating members. Similar to Schnurr and Zayts' (2017) findings, the DM process of a team in a clinical context was collaborative and everyone actively contributed to the process. In the TEFL team, although it was the formal leaders who had the final say, the contributions of the ordinary members constituted the large portion of the decisions made. In Examples 5.2 and 5.3, we have seen that Sarah included Irene in decisions that she had ratified. She also anticipated Irene's contributions, who supported and expanded upon her proposals and subsequently associated herself as co-author of the decisions. Unless it is clear that the decisions were made by a single individual – most often by the person with the highest status – the attribution of ownership could be solely referred to the respective person. This claim mostly correlates to 'decisions by authority' (Marra, 2003: 152). In my meeting dataset, decisions by authority are infrequent due to the close-knit relationship and general collective work within this CofP. Sarah, during the interview, strengthened this claim, mentioning that she would often consult the members before making any decisions. Irene, similarly, stated that the team has always 'worked together' and this distinguished the TEFL team from other groups that may just receive directives from

people in higher positions. The collaborative work in DM is a reflection and reinforcement of the team's negotiated repertoire.

Consequently, there were instances where the ordinary members played active roles in the processes. Referring to Example 5.2, a decision would not have been achieved without the notable contributions from Irene who helped with solutions for the problems raised by Sarah. Example 5.3 demonstrated a similar situation where Eusof was given the privilege to decide the issue with Sarah to accommodate his needs. These instances are presumably illustrating mundane issues that Irene and Eusof were given accountability to decide on; however, my dataset has also demonstrated other crucial roles played by them and the rest of the members, especially in subject matters that demanded their expert knowledge. In Example 5.6, ordinary members collaborated in formulating proposals and giving directives to each other before they reached a consensus. Although they were criticised by Zana for their actions, it is worth unpacking the behaviours performed by the team members and how they facilitated the ordinary members to show leadership. As the participants discussed proposals, they tried to influence, support, expand and challenge each other's suggestions and take on leadership roles. These instances then provided a discrepancy with the conventional claim, which states that DM is a task that is typically performed by leaders but are good illustrations of the DL constellation of this team. Instead of just Sarah and Zana doing the leading, leadership was distributed among the members of the TEFL team where different individuals took on a leadership role at different phases throughout the discussion, hence challenging the problematic leader-follower dichotomies that I raised in Chapter 1.

The following chapter will discuss several examples of DM episodes by providing evidence of the ordinary members taking up leadership roles and highlighting the leadership discourse strategies utilised by ordinary members. The chapter aims to show leadership as a distributed activity where the roles of leadership are shifted on a turn-by-turn basis. Finally, the chapter will address the assertion by Clifton (2009), that a decision that is not made by or attributed to the authorised decision announcer will not generally be treated as a decision by the other participants.

Clifton's claim does not seem to align with the dataset that I have recorded, and the next chapter aims to provide evidence to challenge the assertion.

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate some of the strategies used by ordinary members to undertake leadership. These strategies are used to collaborate, negotiate and distribute roles, and show how the DM processes can also be dominated and led independently by the ordinary members. The strategies found in the dataset are potentially able to challenge the traditional view that certain DM activities are associated exclusively with those with legitimate authority and the problematic leader-follower dichotomies (Collinson, 2017) by convincingly illustrating the leadership roles that are taken up skilfully and actively by the ordinary members. I end the chapter by discussing the DL practices in the team and consider whether all the strategies employed by the ordinary members entail the enactment of leadership.

6.2 DL in the TEFL team

The ordinary members in the team are Irene, Syahira, Wani and Eusof. The members have been working with each other in previous working committees, hence their relationship is close. Although different with respect to age and seniority in the wider departmental context, these differences were less observable in the interactional practices. In meetings and the WA dataset, these members consult, negotiate and seek consensus with each other and the legitimate leaders, hence these acts indicate a sense of egalitarianism that imbued their regular DM talk. In the following analysis, I present the discourse strategies for leadership attempts enacted by Irene, Syahira and Wani. Instances of Eusof, on the other hand, are few and several attempts of his leadership enactment are either challenged by these members or the formal leaders. Due to his status as a relatively new member at NAS, Eusof is less experienced in comparison to the others. Despite that, leadership by Eusof is seen more prominently

when he is prompted about his knowledge on academic research (not shown in the analysis).

The discourse strategies that are utilised by the ordinary members for leadership include the following: (a) giving assurance to the leader, (2) claiming epistemic primacy, (3) sharing leadership roles with other members, (4) reinitiating the abandoned discussions, and (5) demandingly re-proposing a suggestion.

One of the influential members in the team is Irene, who is the youngest member. Having experience in handling TP on several occasions, Irene has wide experience in tasks in relation to TP, therefore she is often found dominating the DM processes in managing the discussion on this area. Example 6.1 presents an instance of this where Irene presents herself as an expert and provides support when it is needed.

Example 6.1 Giving assurance to the leader

Context: This extract presents a discussion in which the members are deciding an appropriate timeslot to conduct a TP briefing for the school teachers. In this discussion, Irene takes an active role by reassuring Sarah on some of Sarah's uncertainties, before directing Sarah towards her proposal.

1. Irene: *time? nine? ((clears throat)) 10? 9 to 12 lah kita letak owk? ((looks at Sarah)) =*
time? nine? ((clears throat)) 10? we will write 9 to 12 lah right? ((looks at Sarah)) =
2. Sarah: *((looks at Irene)) =>gini kejam< by by 11 tu >sekolah bukok berape haribulan?< ((laughs)) =*
((looks at Irene)) = >look wait< by by the 11th >what date do schools reopen?< ((laughs)) =
3. Irene: *= 1st January rasanya ((looks at Sarah))=*
= I think on the 1st of January ((looks at Sarah))=
4. Sarah: *=1st of January? =*
5. Irene: *= mhm*
6. Sarah: *so (.) by by by 11 tu ((looks at Irene)) dalam masa dua minggu tu kita should (.) kita should dapat balik lah dok nama:::*

- so (.) by by by the 11th of January ((looks at Irene)) in two weeks time we should have already received lah the list of names of the school teachers:::
7. Irene: *nama tu sebenarnya hari :::*
the names will be received on :::
8. Sarah: = *hari ::: //hari baru kita tahu*
= the day ::: //on the day itself\
9. Irene: */kejadian tu baru ((looks at Sarah)) dia bawak lampiran D*
/the day itself ((looks at Sarah)) they will bring appendix D
10. Sarah: = ↑ah::: (.) OK::: ((looks at Irene))
11. Irene: mhm ((nods)) =
12. Sarah: = ((looks at Irene)) *so maksudnya kita tak perlu remind remind derang kena::: kena::: sekarang cikgu ((looks at Syahira)) >sokmonya guru besar kak Syahira owk?< ((Syahira nods)) dia jenis dok ingat dia simpan::: ((looks at Irene))=*
so does that mean that we don't have to remind remind them the the teachers ((looks at Syahira)) > usually the school principals will keep the forms for themselves right kak Syahira?< ((Syahira nods)) and will forget where they keep them::: ((looks at Irene))=
13. Syahira: = *erm //dia dapat tu dia simpan je*
= erm //once they get them they will just keep them\
14. Sarah: */hor:::*
/yes:::
15. Irene: = ((looks at Sarah)) *boleh lah kita call two week before maksudnya gitu lah =*
=((looks at Sarah)) we can call them lah two weeks before the briefing lah =
16. Sarah: = *erm OK lah kalau gitu =*
= erm OK lah if that's the case=
17. Irene: =mhm mhm ((writes notes))
18. Sarah: = ((writes notes)) *so its Monday (.) pukul berape? =*
= ((writes notes)) so it is on Monday (.) what time? =
19. Irene: = 9 to 12 lah ((looks at Sarah))
20. Sarah: *9 to 12 ((writes notes)) (.) ((looks at Irene)) pastu kena::: kena kena kena sedia makanan lah owk?*
9 to 12 ((writes notes)) (.) ((looks at Irene)) then have to::: have to have to prepare food lah right?

Although there are only 20 turns in this exchange, I categorise this excerpt as a fairly straightforward DM process. The instance shows a fairly straightforward DM process that discusses more than one issue and thus, the participants are more likely to deviate from the ongoing topic of the discussion.

This example is a good illustration of how Irene plays a crucial role in taking the lead in search of the best solution. Irene's leadership is observed through her attempts to bring the current topic of the discussion to a close. This leadership role is typically associated with the chair, or the formal leader, who takes the lead in manoeuvring discussions and structuring the turn-taking patterns. Raising her concern about the most appropriate time to conduct the meeting, Irene provides several options for the team to choose from, although towards the end of the turn she politely reinforces her proposal to conduct the briefing between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. (line 1). The particles used by Irene in her turn – '*lah*' and '*owk*' – carry two different connotations; while '*lah*' is used to emphasise the proposal, '*owk*' is the particle of the local dialect that softens her reinforcement of the suggestion. Similar to a tag question, '*owk*' acts as a marker for gaining a desired response. Her leadership attempt, however, is denied by Sarah who shifts the topic and raises a concern that the briefing date may fall during the school holidays. The rapid pace in Sarah's voice and her contribution, '>hold on<', indicate that she has a more important thing to say than responding to Irene's proposal (line 2). Sarah's turn shifts the leadership authority back to her.

Responding to Sarah's abrupt query, Irene replies to her and provides the information, which leads Sarah to probe further regarding her concerns (lines 4-9). This phase is interesting because Irene acts as the provider of information by responding to Sarah's uncertainties. One of Sarah's worries is about the attendance confirmation by school teachers who will be participating in the TP, and she is assured by Irene that the respective teachers will indicate their interests during the briefing (lines 7-10). In line 7, Irene is interrupted by Sarah (line 8), but she quickly regains the floor through latching, and briefly corrects Sarah's assumption. Schnurr and Zayts (2017: 81) find that 'latching of turns reflects the speakers' shared

knowledge', but in this case, Irene shows that she is more knowledgeable than the designated leader when she rectifies the leader's assertions.

Note also in line 12 that Sarah expresses another concern about the school teachers who may overlook the briefing. It is Irene who provides a resolution to the concern. In comparison to Sarah, who seems to be rushing in her turn (based on the latches that she makes throughout the turns), Irene, in a calm voice, replies to her and proposes that they could send a reminder by ringing the teachers two weeks before the briefing date (line 15). At this point in the interaction, Sarah seems a bit anxious about the potential problem that they may face, while Irene is steadily providing solutions to her concerns. Sarah's worries are instantly solved after she ratifies Irene's solution (line 16). Note that although Sarah acknowledges Syahira, one of the most senior members, in her query on the school teachers (line 12), it is Irene who offers a solution to the respective concern.

The issues raised by Sarah (lines 2, 6 and 12) develop a chain of concerns that are all elucidated by Irene (lines 3, 7, 9 and 15). This phase, which can be considered an instance of seeking confirmation rather than exclusively undertaking a DM process, shows that Irene plays an important role as an information provider. The information provided by Irene reassures Sarah and encourages her to agree, so that, rather than dispute the suggestion, Sarah follows the flow of the meeting and the lead of Irene. All resolutions by Irene, which are conducted in brief turns (lines 3 and 9) assist the flow of the discussion and bring the discussion back to the main issue.

Although it is Sarah who re-initiates the main topic of discussion (line 18), Irene's reassurance of Sarah's worries help keep the discussion on track. Irene displays no hesitation in her turns and she reinforces the proposal about conducting the briefing at a specified time (line 19) when she latches to Sarah's re-initiation of the topic. Irene's proposal is then legitimised by Sarah through verbal (announcement of the decision) and non-verbal (jotting down notes) cues, which indicate that a decision has been achieved.

This instance demonstrates the negotiations of roles between the leader and the subordinate. Sarah displays her followership to Irene's leadership moves, which consist of confirming uncertain issues, suggesting various proposals and displaying expert knowledge. In addition to being an information provider and the sole 'fixer' of the concerns raised, Irene does leadership by clarifying the uncertainties that Sarah had, and she is legitimised when Sarah is reassured by her proposals. Clifton (2012) claims that the speaker can be considered as doing followership when s/he is following the lead of the prior speaker and accepting their management of meaning. Irene's leadership moves do not last long, however. Sarah claims the leadership role by re-initiating the main issue, ratifying the decision and moving the agenda forward. In Clifton (2012), he finds that one of the subordinates gives the authority to the hierarchical leader to announce a decision, after the team achieved an agreement on a topic that they have collaboratively decided.

Nonetheless, it is worth noting that Irene's discourse strategy in giving assurance to the leader's uncertainties orients the discussion to the main topic and displays her enactment of leadership. Interestingly, the behaviours displayed by Irene are parallel to what Sarah described during an interview. In the interview, Sarah claimed that Irene is an expert when it comes to the TP tasks and she gives Irene full responsibility to manage the preparation of the TP. According to her, Irene is like 'an alarm clock' that reminds her of the actions needing to be taken, and that Irene will always consult her before taking any action. In the extract, Irene does not overpower her leader, but she exerts influence implicitly on tasks within the boundaries of her responsibilities by reassuring (and also confirming) the leader of what they should be doing. Who is doing leadership in this extract is a fluid phenomenon as it changes and is distributed on a turn-by-turn basis and, as illustrated, the decision is jointly authored by Irene and Sarah. Irene's leadership role thus emerges when prompted by Sarah and is manifested in co-authoring the decision with the formal leader.

Another expert participant in the team is Syahira. Having worked for more than 30 years at TOP university, Syahira is the most experienced member among the members in the TEFL team. Due to her expert status, she is often consulted by others, especially Sarah. As Sarah explained in the interview:

Irene and I always refer to her (Syahira) because (.) based on her experience (.) she is like a satellite *lah*, she will have the angle she will observe from above (.) OK which one we haven't done and which one that we have (translated).

This quote is particularly relevant as it points out the acknowledgement by Sarah that Syahira has an expert status within the team. With her wide experience and expertise, Syahira often plays active roles in the meetings, yet she is the least active participant in the WA group. Example 6.2 demonstrates a DM episode where Syahira dominates the discussion by claiming epistemic primacy during a hotly debated discussion.

Example 6.2 Claiming epistemic primacy

Context: This instance is taken from M2 on the topic of allocating appropriate credit hours to a course module, Subject A. Sarah, who has taught the subject many times, persistently mentions that the current credit hours, i.e. three credit hours, are appropriate and that they should remain. On the other hand, Syahira is in opposition to this idea. This discussion is a long discussion with 117 turns and the extract below shows the moments where Syahira challenges Sarah, who keeps emphasising that the current credit hours should not be changed.

35 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE THE PARTICIPANTS, MAINLY SARAH, SYAHIRA AND ZANA, DISCUSS SUBJECT A

1. Syahira: *=er::: >what's the rationale of having two?<(.) > eh having three?< (.) >kalau you ada gok micro teaching se g< ?
=er::: >what's the rationale of having two?<(.) > eh having three?< (.) > if you already have micro teaching <?*
2. Sarah: *er::: kalau tengok pro forma tu kak Syahira the theory part (.) lepas tu last tu kita nak buat apa::: (.) kita nak buat::: micro teaching dok dang (.)*

er::: if you refer to the pro forma the theory part kak Syahira (.) during the final week we want to ::: (.) we want to conduct::: there won't be enough time to conduct the micro teaching

3. Irene: (xxx)=
4. Sarah: = *↑hor (.) sebab kita (.) kita tunjuk ke dia (.) memang betul kak Syahira kata tu =*
= *↑ yes (.) because we (.) we teach them (.) you are right kak Syahira =*
5. Syahira: =mhm
6. Sarah: *tapi sebab macam yang kak Syahira tu dia akan::: yang micro teaching per se tu dia akan:::*
but because like kak Syahira said they will::: the micro teaching per se they will:::
7. Zana: *//cover gok lah*
//that covers the aspect too lah
8. Sarah: */ambik \ \ yang mana mana jer (.) yang macam teaching of tu kita buat solidly untuk that skill*
/include\ \ in any subject (.) for the teaching subjects we will teach solidly one particular skill

SILENCE

9. Syahira: erm:::
10. Zana: *tapi rasalah macam i pun i pun dok::: eh::: (.) rasa macam nampak redundant (.) benda tu redundant >its just the skill< that you you (.) you::: focus more on the skill rather than that (.) benda nya::: secara general bendanya sama kan? (xxx) teaching of ni (.) the apa? er::: lesson plan nya sama::: its just the skills sekarang (xxx) jadi (.) menda lain lah=*
but I think I I think it is not::: eh::: (.) I feel like it is redundant (.) the thing is redundant > its just the skill< that you you (.) you::: focus more on the skill rather than that (.) the content is::: generally the content is the same right? (xxx) the teaching subjects (.) the what? er::: the lesson plans are the same ::: it is just the skills that (xxx) that (.) are different lah =

11. Sarah: =mhm >kalau macam saya< (.) >kalau macam saya buat contoh< (.) >macam teaching of writing ni saya buat dok < (.) theory saja dok cukup ((looks at Syahira)) =
=mhm >for me< (.) >if I were to do for instance< (.) >like teaching a writing module I will not teach< (.) theory only it's inadequate ((looks at Syahira))=
12. Syahira: =>tapi you kena ingat< (.) dia (.) > er diploma je bukan degree ↑eh< =
=>but you need to remember< (.) they're (.) >er diploma students only not degree students ↑eh< =
13. Sarah: =>betul::: //tapi\<
=> yes::: //but\<
14. Syahira: >/ha ((indicates agreement)) so:::\<
15. Sarah: maksud Sarah ajar teori tu (.) maksudnya (.) nak (.) nak ajar macam mana cara (.) sebab kekgi masa (.) masa dia gi sekolah cikgu tanya >you dok belajar ke< cara::: nak nak nak ni ((looks at Syahira)) =
I mean the theory (.) means that (.) to (.) how do we teach them (.) because when they (.) when they go to school the teachers will ask the students >didn't you learn < the strategies::: to to to ((looks at Syahira))
16. Syahira: = tapi kan bukan dia belajar hok teori teori semua tu dekat teaching::: of nih macam::: //erm::: ada subjects tu cuma \
=but didn't they learn all the theories in teaching::: of modules like::: //erm::: there are modules that \
17. Sarah: />ha ((shows agreement)) betul (.) dekat betul ((nods)) < (.)\ ((looks at Syahira)) >tapi macam saya saya tak ambil theory per se< (.) saya ambik saya extract apa yang apa yang the gist of the theory tu buat (.) apply dalam dia punya ni macam mana dia nak incorporate ↑teaching (.) ataupun communicative (.) dalam teaching (.) ha saya buat gitu (.) kalau saya lah =
/> ha ((shows agreement)) true (.) true ((nods))< (.)\ ((looks at Syahira)) >but like I I don't teach the theory independently< (.) I teach I extract the gist of the theory (.) the application and how they're going to incorporate it in ↑teaching (.) or communicative (.) in teaching (.) ha I'd do something like that (.) if it were me lah =

18. Syahira: = *er::: sebab tu kak Syahira pun rasa all those er::: theories tu (.)*
 = *er::: that is why I think all those theories er::: the theories (.)*
19. Sarah: *ha::: ((shows agreement))*
20. Syahira: = *dia dah ada introduction cuma (.) sekarang ni > dia*
↑concurrent jadi memang::: bolok ↑ah< =
 = *the subject already has an introduction (.) now >*
they are ↑concurrent so definitely::: messy ↑ah< =
21. Sarah: = *mhm=*
22. Syahira: = *>you nak ajor ↑ni (.) ↑tapi orang lain pun ajor tu at the same ↓time<*
 = *>you want to teach ↑this (.) ↑but others are teaching the same thing at the same ↓time<*
 SIMULTANEOUS TALK BETWEEN SPEAKERS INCLUDING IRENE, SYAHIRA AND ZANA, WHO ALL SHOW AGREEMENT WITH SYAHIRA'S OPINION
23. Syahira: *((laughs)) >so?:::< it doesn't work that way ((shakes head and laughs)) :: //you hok lain lain*
((laughs)) >so?:::< it doesn't work that way ((shakes head and sarcastic laugh)) :: //you and the others

11 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE SARAH REINFORCES HER POINTS

34. Zana: */tapi to me\\ tiga jam tu::: //too much kot *
/but to me \\ three hours::: // is too much I think
35. Sarah: */mhm mhm*
36. Syahira: */because\\ er::: er>because there is another micro teaching dia ni because yang what i er did was solely on that je walaupun you you you kabo mention generally that those things ada (.) later ni< (.) but (.) focus for this (.) is this one (.) so you incorporate later (.) >ha because because you are doing this separately (.) so kalau you ambik ↑dah (.) ngajo kabor (xxx) you you ngajor at the same time (.) you get me or not ? ok you kata ok::: you need to integrate all the skills tapi your focus is listening speaking (.) you boleh mention gitu < tapi you dok leh la letok er::: other skills tu::: in their teaching (.) because (.) >hok lain tu dah ajor hok*

tu <(.) that that's why menda tu (.) and::: >i can see that the students are::: <=

/because\\ er::: er>because there is another micro teaching module because what I did was solely on that only although you you you mentioned generally that those things are incorporated (.) later< (.) but (.) focus for this (.) is this one (.) so if you incorporate later (.)>ha because because you are doing this separately (.) so if you teach this ↑already (.) teach (xxx) you you teach same things at the same time (.)you get me or not ? ok you said ok::: you need to integrate all the skills but your focus are listening and speaking skills (.) you can mention that < but you cannot la integrate::: other skills::: in their teaching modules (.) because (.) >they have already been taught< (.) that that's why (.) and::: >I can see that the students are:::<=

37. Sarah: =mhm
38. Syahira: lost
39. Irene: =ha ((shows agreement)) Irene pun rasa //(xxx)\\
=ha ((shows agreement)) I feel the same //(xxx)\\
40. Syahira: />ha\\ ((shows agreement)) (.) they just look::: at
//you:::\\ you know<=
41. Eusof: /ye ye\\
/yes yes\\
42. Syahira: = ha::: ((laughing voice))
43. Sarah: = *tapi yang ni lah yang nombor lapan ni yang ni lah yang tahun 2012 yang saya buat ini (.) hok ni hok permintaan daripada::: masa tu [names of people in the hierarchy] hok ni ah (.) mitok buat ni //(xxx)*
= but this one lah number eight that I did in 2012 (.) this one this is the request from::: during that time [names of people in the hierarchy] this one ah (.) they asked me to do this //(xxx)\\
44. Zana: />i rasa kalau micro teaching<\\ kalau you nak tambah credit hours ok je because you kena buat semua >all the elements so kena ada all components< tapi kalau just (.) for the sake of one(.) one component je rasa macam tiga jam tu banyak dah ↓kot=
/> i think if micro teaching<\\ if you want to add credit hours should be OK because you need to teach all >all the elements so all components need to be there< but

- if just (.) for the sake of one (.) one component only
three hours is already a long time ↓ I think =
45. Syahira: =>*i rasa gitu //gok\ <((laughs))* =
=> i feel //the same\ <((laughs)) =
46. Sarah: /mhm\\=
47. Zana: =*sebab benda yang sama je (.) the steps that are involved are the ↓//same*
= because there are the same things (.) the steps that are involved are the ↓//same\
48. Syahira /same\\=

FOUR TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE ZANA SUPPORTS SYAHIRA BY ELABORATING ON HER OPINION

53. Sarah: =>((points to what is written in the documents)) *kalau gitu tu kita kene ni ah< baiki //balik ah ((looks at Syahira)) describe the theory of*
=>((points to what is written in the documents)) if that is the case we need to ah< revise //revise ah ((looks at Syahira)) describe the theory of\
EIGHT TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE ZANA AND SYAHIRA CO-CONSTRUCT THEIR OPINION WHILE SARAH SHOWS AGREEMENT
61. Syahira: = ((looks at Irene)) *is it relevant for diploma to describe? what //that is more at at the beginning<*

10 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE THE PARTICIPANTS DISCUSS REVISING THE COURSE OBJECTIVES OF SUBJECT A. THE OMITTED TURNS ALSO INCLUDE SIMULTANEOUS TALK OF MORE THAN TWO SPEAKERS

71. Sarah: =>kalau saya memang setuju kak Syahira pada saya kalau saya mengajar kelas *teaching of writing* tu saya nak tengok dia punya AVA dengan //teaching\ ((Syahira backchannels)) dengan project pada saya saya nak tengok hok tu je (.) tapi sebab kita bergantung disini ((shows paper)) that's why kita request jadi tiga tu<=
=> if it was me I am definitely in agreement with kak Syahira, for me if I teach the subject I just want to see their teaching aids and the way they //teach\ ((Syahira backchannels)) and their projects for me I want to see these things only (.) but because we are depending on this ((shows the documents)) that's why we have requested three hours credit <=

31 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE SYAHIRA AND ZANA CO-CONSTRUCT THEIR OPINION MEANWHILE SARAH BRINGS THE TOPIC TO A CLOSE

102. Sarah: =ha::: ((shows agreement)) >betul (.) betul (.) betul< (.) dah kalau gitu maksudnya kita kena angkat lama semula la wat naik ↑mula (.) hok ni bekki balik hok tu //hok teaching of\
= ha::: ((shows agreement)) >exactly (.) exactly (.) exactly < (.) so that means we need to use the old pro forma and ↑re-send them (.) this one needs to be amended // the teaching of\

ZANA AND SYAHIRA MENTION THAT THEIR VIEWS ARE BASED ON THEIR HUMBLE OPINION

This DM process is classified as a fairly straightforward process; long turns are taken but the exchange takes place and the topic is discussed thoroughly with no deviation. This long discussion involves active contributions from Sarah, Syahira and Zana, meanwhile Eusof and Irene are minimally involved through non-verbal cues and backchannelling.

Prior to reaching this phase of the interaction, Sarah mentions to the group that Subject A, a subject that focuses on teaching skills, is currently allocated with three credit hours and she advocates this idea. In line 1, using the word 'rationale', Syahira demands Sarah to provide valid reasons and challenges Sarah's claim with a critical remark, 'if you already have micro teaching?'. Based on Syahira's tone of voice, her turn appears to be relatively satirical and demanding, as if indicating that Sarah is unaware that Subject A already comprises a micro teaching activity. It is already established among the team members that the micro teaching activity makes up a significant part of Subject A, hence increasing contact hours for Subject A needs to be supported by valid justifications. The fact that it is a common knowledge is supported by a turn by Sarah, who expresses her alignment with Syahira's remarks – '*yes you are right kak Syahira*' (line 4) – which simultaneously legitimises Syahira's proposal and accepts Syahira's management of meaning.

Being a former instructor of Subject A, Sarah claims epistemic primacy when she reiterates her experience in teaching the subject and why it requires more contact hours with the students (line 8). Not only that, she also supports her own proposal by making reference to Subject A's course outline that the group is currently referring to. Zana, whose opinion is in alignment with Syahira, claims that the content of Subject A is redundant because the students will learn similar theories of teaching in other teaching-based modules (line 10). This poses a challenge to Sarah's proposal as she is challenged by other members who also voice their agreement with Syahira's proposal (not shown here). At this point, all members oppose Sarah's views and support Syahira instead. The support that Syahira receives strengthens and legitimises her proposal, leaving Sarah unsupported.

In a fast and cynical tone of voice, Syahira shows dominance and challenges Sarah by explicitly 'reminding' Sarah that the students are only at diploma level and so they are not expected to master knowledge that is beyond the diploma modules (line 12). The stresses she put on the words '*remember*', '*degree*' and the particle '*eh*' appear to undermine Sarah's credibility as the instructor of Subject A. These words work like a 'warning' to Sarah to have a reality check. Alongside that, the rapid pace and a higher pitched voice, '*eh*', are also significant, as they reinforce Syahira's opinion in

a satirical way. 'Eh' could be similar to tag questions, and in this extract, it is expressed demandingly, as if the addressee requires a desired response from the interlocutor. On closer inspection, these linguistic features appear to be critical as they appear to belittle Sarah's proposal and knowledge, and set her apart as someone who is unaware of the 'reality' and nature of this subject. With these linguistic resources, Syahira criticises Sarah's proposal and challenges Sarah's leadership simultaneously. Syahira can be seen to be claiming deontic authority when she defines what Sarah's future actions should be: Sarah should not increase the contact hours for the subject.

Syahira makes a further claim to epistemic primacy when she mentions that the subject will be '*messy*' if Sarah's proposal is to be executed (line 20). Latching to Sarah's turn, Syahira once again uses a rapid pace and stresses certain points in the turn, which indicate her strong belief in her point of view (line 22). She laughs and cynically poses a rhetorical question to Sarah. With a discourse marker '*so?*' and a critical remark – '*it doesn't work that way*' – Syahira undermines Sarah's opinion and claims epistemic primacy for herself. Also, Syahira's use of pronouns – '*you and the others*' – draw a clear distinction between herself as the more experienced and those who are less experienced, namely Sarah and presumably the other academics who are teaching Subject A. Her cynical laughter and the gesture of shaking her head display her firm rejection of Sarah's opinion. Her views receive support from Zana and Irene which subsequently strengthens and legitimises her proposal (not shown in the extract). With the claim of epistemic primacy and the support that Syahira gains from the other members who reinforce her proposal, Syahira appears to be the most influential person in the discussion and does leadership.

Despite the challenges that she receives, Sarah resists engaging with Syahira's argument as she highlights again that retaining the credit hours would potentially lead to time constraints in completing the module. Zana latches onto Sarah's turn and promptly mentions that allocating three hours for Subject A '*is too much*' (line 34). Zana furthers Syahira's proposal and with her position as an HOD, she explicitly legitimises it and weakens Sarah's proposal.

Syahira's dominance is seen more apparently when she then takes a long turn to re-justify her proposal (line 36) and although there is considerable mitigation in the turn, she challenges Sarah's view firmly. Notice that Syahira code switches to Malaysian English and poses a rhetorical question to strongly emphasise her proposal. With tension in her voice, she reformulates what Sarah has suggested: - *'...you get me or not? ok you said ok::: you need...'* - seems to de-emphasise and downplay Sarah's authority as the leader by suggesting that Sarah might not have understood the justifications that she has been provided with. Syahira's reformulation of Sarah's views resembles what Baxter (2011: 235) terms a 'double-voiced discourse' (henceforth DvD). DvD is when one modifies what he or she says 'in the light of their colleagues' (ibid.: 231) which acts as 'a judgement call' (ibid.: 239). The rapid pace of voice and her intense voice also give an indication that Syahira is impatient with the fact that she has to repeat her point. Yueng (2004: 130), in her study of participative DM in Hong Kong, demonstrated that a directive question, 'You agree [with] that?', which is phrased into a statement, implies the superior's impatience in dealing with the subordinate's reluctance to conform. Thomas (1986 as cited in Yueng, 2004: 130) claims that such a question demonstrates a coercive effect. At this point, we could fairly say that Syahira's turn demeans Sarah's credibility as the head of the team.

Additionally, the pronoun '*you*' utilised by Syahira serves several functions. Firstly, the pronoun that she directs at Sarah seems to distinguish between Sarah and the other members (who agree with Syahira). Being the only member with a different view, Sarah's authority seems to be de-legitimised. The second function of '*you*', which is utilised in authoritative DvD (ibid.: 239), offers a new interpretation for Sarah, where she evaluates Sarah's proposal and at the same time, displays her expert authority, as seen throughout her turn (line 36). The DvD and the use of pronoun '*you*' in this long turn allows Syahira to claim a greater epistemic primacy and authority over Sarah's leadership.

The following turns (lines 44-45; 47-48) observe Zana and Syahira co-constructing their views which strengthen the proposal. At this point, Syahira's leadership and expertise are legitimised by Zana. Although Sarah finally agrees to Syahira's proposal

(line 53), her initiation of the information stated in Subject A's course outline brings tension back into the discussion. After a long and heated discussion between Syahira, Sarah and Zana, where Syahira's voice begins to show tension (line 61), Sarah finally brings the topic to a close (line 71). Rather than looking at Sarah, Syahira makes eye contact with Irene and again, with a critical remark, questions whether the learning objectives mentioned by Sarah are relevant and match up to the actual level of their students (line 61). Stressing the word '*describe*' in a deep and satirical voice, Syahira conveys her strong opposition to the use of the verb; she thought it was an inappropriate verb when writing the learning objectives of Subject A's in its course outline.

A few turns following Syahira's contribution, Sarah expresses her agreement and proposes that the team replaces the terms introduced in Subject A's course outline. The proposal receives complete agreement from both Syahira and Zana, and Sarah summarises the discussion which finally wraps up the issue (line 102).

This phase also demonstrates Sarah's sensitivity to the CofP normative behaviour within which she is operating. After paying attention to Syahira's insistence throughout the discussion, as well as the support given towards her by other members, Sarah firmly draws the discussion to a close in order to relieve the tension. Although Sarah has to concede to Syahira's point of view, she shows that she is the formal leader by systematically exerting control over the progression of the agenda. By framing Syahira's proposal as a decision, she agrees to the proposal and closes the topic after it has been extensively discussed. Irene and Eusof, on the other hand, contribute minimally, as would be expected due to their lack of knowledge on the subject and experience.

This excerpt is a good illustration of how Syahira challenges the authority of the team leader and is supported for her leadership. Syahira takes a leadership role by being a prominent speaker in the discussion, the main provider of information and the one who expresses approval of the proposal. Through her active turns, non-verbal cues such as the pace and pitch of voice, and most importantly, her expertise and knowledge of the topic discussed, she vetoes and disassociates herself from Sarah's

opinion through a variety of objections. One of the ways is through claiming epistemic primacy, challenging and criticising Sarah's viewpoints, and reinforcing her own proposals. Syahira's influence is also indicated through Zana's unequivocal support towards her contributions which legitimises the proposal. This example too reflects the assertion by Holmes and Stubbe (2003: 77) that 'contributions from less powerful meeting players may 'seed' ideas that are later developed and endorsed by more statusful and authoritative participants'. Zana's facilitation supports Syahira's claim to epistemic primacy and further challenges Sarah's authority and so too her leadership. Also, the support that Syahira receives from Irene and Eusof strengthens Syahira's position, while leaving doubt that Sarah is the one in charge of the decision. Zana's turns are also significant in the arrival at the decision when she co-constructs the decision with Syahira (lines 34, 44-48).

The challenges put forth by Syahira notably contest the one-dimensional dyad of leader-follower discussed in mainstream leadership studies (Learmonth and Morrell, 2016; Collinson, 2017). The amount of challenges received by Sarah from Syahira and other members show that Sarah's leadership is weakened, as is her authority as the decision-maker. Leadership is in fact more distributed based on the members' expertise and those who manage to claim epistemic primacy and convince other members, receive support and are legitimised for his/her leadership attempts. In Schnurr and Zayts' (2011) study on leadership in a multinational corporation company, the authors report that the recently appointed leader is challenged for her attempts to construct her identity as the one in charge and the leader of the team. However, the attempts are not always successful as she is sometimes contested by the other interlocutor and less supported for her decisions and explanations. Schnurr and Zayts' findings and this example demonstrate that the subordinates do resist the leadership of the formal leaders and exert enormous influence on the direction of the DM, thereby rejecting the overtly-simplified dichotomies of leader-follower.

On closer inspection, the leadership practices in this team are not always harmonious (see also Choi and Schnurr, 2014). As I have indicated earlier, Sarah and Syahira, who most notably disagree on proposals, both attempt to do leadership. This is reflected in Sarah's resistance to opposition, and Syahira's challenges towards Sarah's ideas.

In the end, it is Syahira's proposal that is brought to a close thus it is appropriate to conclude that Syahira generally owns the decision. The challenges posed by Syahira temporarily 'threaten' the team leader's authority but such contestation does not entirely rebuff the vital role of the leader. Notice that both Zana and Syahira portray humbler images by toning down their turns at the end of the extract. They state that their views are just their personal opinion. This situation implies their acknowledgement that Sarah holds a higher position in the team and is the main decision maker, despite their open criticism of her ideas. This excerpt also shows that the members are conscious about the roles and relationships at all levels, including one's expert knowledge and hierarchy.

The leadership role is then undertaken by Sarah, who performs her prerogative role as the decision announcer. DL is explicitly seen when Syahira and Zana outline future actions and Sarah's act in summarising the discussion. These activities are indexed for leadership performance. These observations demonstrate that although the ordinary members take a more critical role in leadership and resist the team leader's proposal, the decision still needs to be finalised and announced by the designated leader. In particular, we have witnessed Syahira and Zana rise to exhibit leadership and stepping back at other times to allow Sarah to enact her prerogative role as the decision announcer.

While this instance demonstrates Syahira's direct and critical remarks towards the official leader's proposals, Example 6.3 shows Syahira and Irene, who are the most senior and the youngest members in the team, respectively, contest each other's proposals to come to a decision. The example illustrates how these members do leadership without relying on Sarah.

Example 6.3 Sharing leadership roles with the other members

Context: This extract describes a discussion of the relevance of using record books by the TEFL students during their TP. The book, also known as the log book, has traditionally been used by previous students to record their daily lesson plans. The issue here is whether the use of the book should be continued or whether the lesson

plan could be recorded and kept electronically. Sarah comes into the meeting later when the discussion has already taken place.

EIGHT TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE IRENE INITIATES THE ISSUE AND INFORMS THE TEAM THAT THE RECORD BOOKS ARE LOW IN STOCK

1. Irene: = *yang first > tu kan:::?*< *yang kita suruh dia beli buku baru ((smiley voice)) (.) macam last year kan dah comei proper (.) hok tu kene tempah jugak ni*

= the first > one right:::??< we asked them to buy new books ((smiley voice)) like last year right they were nice and looked proper (.) they need to be ordered again

SILENCE

2. Syahira: *sebab (.) kadang tu (.) yelah kita (.) kita nak kita memang suruh dia buat gitu er::: dan >sebab dari dulu lagi< kita suruh dia wat //gitu\ <= sebab sebelum tu (.) er::: actually dia ada::: buku log (.) macam latihan industri yang //standard dia pakai semua\ tapi dia::: //tidak memenuhi keperluan kita\ (.) tu kita suruh dia buat sendiri lepas tu lately yang recently kan::: kate::: schools::: (.) don't need record book anymore [Sarah comes in] they do it in the computer (.) they already their er::: //weekly::: \ er lesson plan and everything in the computer (.)so::: I am not so sure*

because (.) sometimes (.) yes lah we (.) we want we did ask them to do er::: and >we asked them a long time ago< we asked them to use //that\ < = because before that (.) er::: actually they have log books (.) that were used for the industrial placement //the standard industrial placement log books\ but //they did not fulfil our requirements \ (.) that was why we asked them to do their own and lately right::: recently schools::: said::: (.) they did not need record books any more [Sarah comes in] they did it on the computer (.) they already had their er::: //weekly::: \ er lesson plans and everything was on the computer (.) so::: I am not so sure

3. Irene: //mhm mhm mhm\ ((nods)) /ah ha ha \ /yes:: \ /a ah\\ (.)
a ah ek [indicates agreement]
4. Syahira: *whether::: we require (XXX) for ↑our::: evaluation of menda
ni (xxx) (.) >for assessment< //we require them to do that\
whether::: we require (xxx) for ↑our::: evaluation of this
(xxx) (.) >for assessment < //we require them to do that\
/memang ada assessment:::\\ tapi kalau teachers hok lain
pun kan dia memang ada::: record book kan? (.) ↑kan
macam //cikgu cikgu:::\\
/there will be assessments:: \\ but if the teachers other
teachers too have they have::: record books right? (.)↑ like
//teachers ::: *
6. Zana: /hor ye lah\\ >kene hantor sekolah< lagi kan? kene hantor
ke guru besor check semua=
/yes right lah\\ >still using at schools< right? students need
to send the books to the headmasters so they could check
them all =
7. Irene: =mhm
8. Syahira: *er zaman dulu ((laughs)) //zaman lening dok doh rasa\=
that was in the past ((laughs)) nowadays they may not be
used any more\=*
9. Zana: /eh zaman lening ada lagi kan ada lagi owk? \\
/eh now they still use the books right still use them right?
\\
10. Irene: />eh tak lah<\\ nampak ummi duk tulis je
/>eh no lah<\\ I saw my mum still using it
11. Syahira: *duk tulis gi?= ((laughing voice))
still using it ?= ((laughing voice))*
12. Irene: =mhm:::=
13. Syahira: =sebab::: sebab my mother dulu memang kena tulis pastu:::
((laughs and gazes at Zana))
= because::: because my mother used to use the record
books then::: ((laughs and gazes at Zana))
14. Irene: *erm::: tak lah memang //ada\
erm::: no lah they are still using them*
15. Syahira: /tapi::: er:::\\ =
/but::: er:: \\=
16. Irene: = >weekly kan dia kene hantar< (.) guru besar:::
= >they need to send them< (.) to the school principals
weekly:::

17. Syahira: *hok student kita ya lah tapi::: ada hok wat one point tu (.) student kata (.) cikgu kata ((laughing voice)) dok buat doh dalam ni buat dalam computer belaka pastu dia sent::: ke::: tu lah ((laughing voice))*
 yes for our students lah but::: there was one point where (.) the students said (.) the teachers said ((laughing voice)) we did not write in this any more, all were written on the computer they send::: to::: to lah ((laughing voice))
18. Irene: *hmm::: sebab kita kan (.) tengok (.) kita tengok //kita tengok\ (.) kalau buat computer::: susah nak assess ah*
 hmm::: because we (.) examine (.) we examine //we examine\ (.) if we use computers::: it would be difficult to assess ah
19. Syahira: */ha::: kita kena assess\ memang student kita dokleh buat gitu kite kene ada rekod book //jugok*
 /ha::: we need to assess them\ our students definitely cannot do that we need to have record books //too\
20. Irene: */hmm:::\ kita kena ada gok::: //so kene tempoh ah*
 /hmm::: \ we need to have record books::: //so need to order ah\

A STAFF MEMBER COMES INTO THE MEETING ROOM

21. Zana: */tapi\ sebab baru ni sem baru ni ada lagi::: baru ni ada lagi guna buku tu sebab dia kata buku tu dia >hantar ke guru //besar\< nak tengok lesson plan =*
 /but\ because there are still::: books left that were ordered last semester\ recently there were some students who used the books because they said that the books were sent to the school //principals\ the principals want to review the lesson plans=
22. Syahira: */ha::: \((shows agreement)) memang kita suruh*
 /ha:::\ ((shows agreement)) we did ask them
23. Zana: *yes? ((talks to a colleague who enters the meeting room who seeks Zana))*

ZANA TALKS TO THE COLLEAGUE AND OTHER MEMBERS JOIN IN THE TALK. 15 SECONDS LATER, THE TEAM DISCUSSES ANOTHER TOPIC AND DOES NOT PICK UP THE ORIGINAL ISSUE AGAIN

This DM is an instance of a complex process that takes place in M1. Although the discussion looks generally straightforward, the ratification is done implicitly, which makes it a complex DM process.

This discussion evolves around an explicit and aggravated disagreement between Irene and Syahira and their collaborative leadership simultaneously. After informing the team that the record books are low in stock, Irene proposes a suggestion about continuing the use of log books for the next batch of students. After a very brief silence, Syahira takes the following turn (line 2) to provide a rather long explanation about the previous practice of using the record books. According to her, the standardised log books used by the TEFL students (also utilised in other training programmes) are no longer relevant as they do not fulfil the requirements for trainee teachers. Also, she adds that the previous record books are out of date and that the students are required to keep their lesson plans in digital forms (line 2). By reiterating the chronology of the usage of record books, Syahira presents herself as someone who is experienced and thus claims epistemic primacy on the issue. Nonetheless, her claim is weakened when she expresses her uncertainty regarding whether lesson plans in digital forms would be the best option as the students are expected to hand in the lesson plans for evaluation purposes (line 4). Her turn (line 2) -‘*so::: I am not so sure*’ - opens the floor for others to take up the leadership role and any member can now provide clarification and emerge as the prominent speaker. At this time too, Sarah returns to the meeting room and gets back to her seat.

Leadership is now shifted to Irene who reinforces her proposal and attempts to direct the discussion according to her proposal. She claims epistemic primacy by highlighting that the school teachers support the use of the record book. Irene receives legitimisation of her leadership attempt when Zana immediately comes in and gives confirmation that the books should be handed in to the school principals on a weekly basis (line 6). Challenging Irene’s proposal, Syahira disputes their views in a laughing voice, mentioning that the use of record books is out-of-date (line 11). Through this turn, Syahira reclaims epistemic primacy when she judges and questions

the relevance of using the log books these days. The laughter here – although the turn is not intended to be humorous – is presumably meant to ridicule the idea, but also acts as a less authoritative move to show her disagreement (Warner-Garcia, 2014). It also mitigates the potential face-threat, especially considering that Syahira's disagreement goes against the opinion of the hierarchical leader, Zana.

Without latching, both Zana and Irene defend their views by mentioning that the books are still being used in schools. Zana's use of the tag question '*owk*' (translated: 'right?' in formal English) (line 9) also acts as a rhetorical question as she sounds quite confident in her voice. Irene, with rapid pace in her voice and overlapping with Syahira's turn, shows immediate opposition to Syahira. Irene also strengthens her proposal by including her mother, who is also a school teacher. Giving the example of her mother who is an experienced teacher, she validates her proposal and demeans Syahira's views. Irene attempts to claim leadership, also by showing expertise, when she says; '*I saw my mum still using it*' (line 10). In this way, Irene implies that she has knowledge about the current trends in schools.

With a laughing voice, Syahira poses a cynical question – '*still using it?*' (line 11) – to show her disbelief of Irene's claim that her mother uses the record books in this day and age. She then challenges Irene by comparing Irene's mother with her own mother, who utilised the record books in the past. It is fascinating to note how Syahira uses humour – which only she finds funny – by comparing their mothers. Irene's mother is a lot younger, presumably a similar age to Syahira. Considering that Syahira is a senior staff member and the age gap between her and Irene is big, it is unreasonable for her to compare teaching trends between Irene's and her own mother's time. Not only that, Syahira also reiterates her experience involving previous students, whose teachers observed that the books were no longer used. Instead, the lesson plans are written in digital format (line 17). In these turns, Syahira claims leadership for herself when she ridicules and criticises Irene's views in an attempt to display greater knowledge about the current trends in schools.

In responding to Syahira's criticism, Irene re-justifies the practicality of utilising the books as they will help the examiners when assessing the students (lines 18 and 20).

It thus constitutes the turning point in the discussion to their disagreement as Syahira deflects the attention away from her criticisms and reinforces Irene's proposal. The overlaps between her and Syahira's turns (lines 19-20) show the co-construction of each other's knowledge and meaning, until a consensus is reached. At this point, Irene manages to claim leadership as she successfully influences Syahira to agree with her. Through the signal of the discourse marker, 'so' (line 20), Irene indicates a topic shift, where she re-proposes her suggestion to order more record books. Marra (2003) states that particle 'so' is often used in proposing solutions and with it, the participant highlights the relevance of their turn in relation to the main issue. Here, the particle also acts as approval-seeking from an authorised person to ratify the proposal. Although it would be easy for Irene to ratify the decision (due to her persistence in reinforcing the idea and the support that she gains from Zana), Irene does not claim a leadership role for herself. In fact, she waits for Zana to ratify the proposal as a decision.

Looking at Zana's contribution, there is no linguistic indication or explicit signal that a decision is ratified. The sole contextual indicator that shows a decision is achieved is through the topic shift (Marra, 2003) by Zana when she addresses the staff member who came to speak to Zana (line 23). Additionally, the team does not pick up the topic again, instead initiating a new issue. The later discussion on the implementation of this topic in the WA group is another sign that a decision has been made at this stage (see also Example 6.4a). Huisman (2011) argues that what is considered a decision depends on the culture of the team. In this extract we see that the participants understand, or better, know intuitively that a decision has been reached – without the need of the leader to formally announce it (see also Schnurr and Zayts, 2017).

In this extract, Irene struggles to defend her proposal, but she still manages to influence Syahira with the idea of using the record books. She takes a prominent role by steering the discussion towards a decision, and successfully resists Syahira's challenge and claims to be an expert on the topic. Despite this, it should be kept in mind that Syahira, too, plays a crucial role. By criticising the proposal and questioning the practicality of Irene's suggestion, she judges what is perceived as an appropriate

solution for the issue and subsequently gives explicit approval to Irene's proposal. This collaborative work is reflective of the close working relationship between the members, where one can challenge and ridicule another's views without encouraging any conflict.

On a turn-by-turn basis, this example thus shows that leadership performance can be distributed among the ordinary members without interference from the team leader. Sarah, who is present throughout the discussion, is not involved at all during the exchange and takes a back seat, allowing the others to take the lead. Meanwhile, Zana contributes to the discussion by legitimising Irene's proposal and so she legitimises Irene's leadership performance. Zana's behaviour shows that the leaders can leave the discussion to the ordinary members, and she as the formal leader only needs to step in when appropriate. The distribution and negotiation of leadership roles display the dynamics of DL within the TEFL team.

While this example shows that Irene displays less authoritative roles (due to her polite resistance towards Syahira) in leadership, Example 6.4 (a-b) shows how she performs leadership by managing the abandoned discussion, which leads her to own the final say in the discussion.

Example 6.4a Re-initiating the abandoned discussion

This instance of a complex DM process is divided into two parts and they are taken from the WA dataset. They are labelled accordingly with a and b. The lack of responses received by the participants and topic deviation in the discussion delay the DM processes, and it takes several days for the team to reach a decision. Prior to this interaction, Sarah has initiated her plan to have a meeting to get the team prepared for a briefing with the TEFL students. In responding to her turn, Eusof discusses his work schedule with Sarah to ease her planning, meanwhile Zana initiates a reminder of another task to the team. Zana's topic deviation shifts the participants' attention to another topic, until Irene brings the topic of the briefing planning back on track.

501)12/12/2015, 4:57 pm Irene: *Kak Sarah..bila nk meeting?briefing kte nk buat Thursday kn?*
-
Kak Sarah..when is the meeting? we are going to conduct the briefing on Thursday right?

502) 12/12/2015, 4:57 pm Sarah: *Tak yah lah nak closing grand2 ye tk*
-
There will be no grand closing lah won't it

503) 12/12/2015, 4:57 pm Zana: *xdok makna dh nk wat gede2*
-
definitely will not have anything grand

504) 12/12/2015, 4:57 pm Sarah: *Irene, ke kita nak buat lepas dorang final*
-
Irene, or do we want to do it after the students' final

505) 12/12/2015, 4:57 pm Sarah: *I mean lepas final paper depa*
-
I mean after their final exam papers

506) 12/12/2015, 4:58 pm Eusof: *Tulah kakzana, buat biasa2 je*
-
Right kak Zana, will just do something simple

507) 12/12/2015, 4:58 pm Irene: *Bole gk kak sarah..sbb last paper they ols 1st jan rsenye*
-
That should be fine kak sarah.. because their last paper is on 1st Jan I think

508)12/12/2015, 4:58 pm Irene: *Long gap b4 [before] LC [language camp]*
-

509)12/12/2015, 4:58 pm Sarah: *Setuju tak kakSyahira? Eusof? Kakzana?*
-
Agree kak Syahira? Eusof? Kak Zana?

510)12/12/2015, 4:58 pm Sarah: *Kita buat briefing utk student on 1st jan*
-
We will do the briefing for the students on 1st Jan

511)12/12/2015, 4:58 pm Irene: *[name of a person] xde ni..cane kte nk tempah buku?i doubt dia da hntar kedai aritu*
-
[name of a person] how are we going to order the book? I doubt he has sent the book sample to the shop

The different topics being discussed in this WA exchange support Warkentin, Sayeed and Hightower (1997: 978) observation that virtual discussions are not able to duplicate the normal 'give and take' of face-to-face interactions. In asynchronous discussions such as WA, people 'type and read at different rates' which results in a 'lack of focus as the members are talking at once' (ibid.: 978). This situation is particularly observable in this instance. The topic that is initiated by Sarah while she and the other members are discussing another issue invites a number of comments to different topics in a short period of time.

By directing the team to the main agenda, Irene takes a leadership role and quickly seeks confirmation from Sarah about the briefing (line 501). This role of bringing a discussion back on track is generally the prerogative of the formal leader and/or the chair, but here it is claimed by Irene. Following Irene's lead, Sarah responds by directing a question to Irene about conducting the briefing at a later date, i.e. after the students are done with the final exams (line 504). Noteworthy here is Sarah's direct proposal to Irene only, while the others are discussing another topic in between (lines 502-503; 506). Simultaneously, this may indicate that Sarah positions Irene as the expert and as 'second in command', especially in tasks related to the TP. Upon receiving approval from Irene (line 507), Sarah then seeks the others' agreement (line 509) but the topic is shifted to another issue by Irene concurrently (as indicated by the time stamps). Irene's deviation directs the team's attention away from the issue and brings the main topic of the students' briefing to a halt. Sarah's attempt to gain the members' agreement to her proposal is continued two days later but she fails to gain sufficient responses from the members. Another two days later, Irene re-initiates the topic on the WA group in her attempt to finalise the much delayed discussion.

The code-switching and informal typography like *b4* (before) in this extract reflect the team's collegial and informal atmosphere and their close relationship with each other.

Example 6.4b

Context: Irene re-initiates the topic about finalising the date for the TP briefing. She re-posts the date proposed by Eusof during the last conversation the team had about this topic.

- 609) 16/12/2015 4:33 pm - Irene: Assalam¹⁵ all..is it ok to do the briefing on 28/12?
- 610) 16/12/2015 4:39 pm - Irene: [A snapshot of a formal letter is attached]
- 611) 16/12/2015 4:43 pm - Irene: If everyone agrees on this, we can proceed with letter to schools
- 612) 16/12/2015 10:31 pm- Sarah: Salam Irene, i am ok wth that
- 613) 16/12/2015 10:33 pm - Eusof: *Sama Irene*
Same as Irene
- 614) 16/12/2015 10:34 pm - Sarah: Guys, this Sunday, can we meet up for a while after the EC meeting? We need to finalise the lesson plan ya

By re-initiating the issue, Irene takes the leading role of seeking confirmation of the date suggested. In previous discussions (not shown here), it is Sarah who performs this role, but for this extract, Irene takes a leadership role presumably to bring the discussion to a close. This instance also shows that leadership is distributed between the formal leader and ordinary members. During the initial phase of interaction, Sarah performs the leadership activities (e.g. getting back to the participants, collecting responses from others, issuing possible dates), but in the final phase of DM, Irene plays an equally important role by manoeuvring the discussion towards a decision.

As indicated in line 611, Irene informs the team that she will proceed with sending the correspondence letters to the participating schools if everyone agrees to the date

¹⁵ Assalam is a short form for the Islamic greeting Assalamualaikum.

that the team have negotiated previously. Irene claims another leadership activity, i.e. deontic rights, when she decides on the future work for the team. Also, the option offered by Irene -*'if everyone agrees...'*- conveys her demand to gain the members' responses so that she can finalise the decision and take appropriate action. Her role of seeking consensus implies her attempts to manage the discussion and brings the topic to close, and this behaviour is often found to be enacted by the chair or the formal leaders (Marra, 2003; Angouri and Marra, 2010). A potentially strong reason for Irene taking up the role is due to her responsibility in the TP (see line 611 where she attaches a formal letter that she has prepared) in that she does leadership within the boundaries of her expertise and responsibilities. The attachment of the letter implicitly implies the urgent need to address and finalise this discussion. Although she receives responses quite late, both Sarah and Eusof show their agreement with Irene's proposal (lines 612-613). In the following post (line 614), Sarah initiates a new topic, and the change in topic gives an indication that a decision has been reached.

The decision is not ratified, but the topic movement by Sarah could be taken as a sign of ratification (line 614). Schnurr and Zayts (2017), in their study on DM in a group of geneticists, define a very implicit decision as an 'invisible decision' (ibid.: 14). There are no verbal or non-verbal cues that help the analyst to identify the moments in which a decision is being made, and 'the team members seem to almost intuitively know when a case has been closed and when it is time to move on to the next one' (ibid.: 14). Although my context is different from that of Schnurr and Zayts, the same conclusions can be drawn regarding the topic shift: when Sarah changes the topic, this can be seen as an indication that a decision has been reached, and the participants recognise the decision. Unlike meetings, WA lacks auditory-visual signals, meaning that researchers need to provide evidence through orthographic and typographic means in digital writing (Darics, 2017). There is also no indication of non-verbal cues and 'action-declaring line[s]' (Stevanovic, 2012: 844) such as 'yea let's take it' to indicate that a decision is reached in this example. However, the fact that no further discussion is initiated on this topic and the actual realisation of the decision, show that the consensus is reached at this stage. The briefing is held on the

date as agreed on the WA group, i.e. on the 28th December 2016 (line 609), hence strengthened the claim that a decision is indeed, reached at this point.

This rather slow and unresponsive way of achieving a decision seems to be part of the established discursive norms that characterise the TEFL team's CofP. On the other hand, it is very rare to see Syahira responding to the team's WA discussion, hence the majority agreement achieved here could also be used as an indication that a decision has been reached. During the interviews, all members acknowledge Syahira's inactivity on the WA group, but there is no evidence that her unresponsive behaviour, or lurking, impedes the DM processes of the WA group. Zana, on the other hand, is not required to attend the briefing, hence her response is presumably less anticipated.

The extract shows that it is Irene who has the final say on the topic when her re-initiation receives agreement from most of the participants. It could be deduced that the formal leader's ratification is not always necessary for the others to identify when a proposal becomes a decision. Simultaneously, this situation refutes the suggestion by Angouri and Angelidou (2012: 76) that a formal leader is 'the final and main decision ratifier', and Clifton's (2009) claim that a decision that is not properly announced by the leader will not be treated as a decision. In the extract above, the decision is left without explicit ratification, casting doubt that the formal leader has the final say, but nonetheless it is clear that it is Irene who owns the decision. Her re-initiation of the topic manages to bring the discussion to a close. Irene's leadership role is not legitimised nor contested, yet we can conclude that her leadership manages to bring the much delayed discussion to its conclusion.

The next example illustrates how Wani, who is one of the senior members in the group, repetitively reinforces her proposal in a demanding way in her effort to influence the DM process.

Example 6.5 Demandingly re-proposing a suggestion

Context: This example is taken from M4 and is divided into two parts. The topic concerned is about the types of traditional sweets to be served during the TP briefing

with the school teachers. Prior to this interaction, the participants had discussed the topic but did not come to a consensus. Thus, Sarah brings up the topic again.

1. Sarah: *hok tu hok bahagian nak briefing bahagian kita nak prepare ni rasanya OK OK dah tu owk makanan tadi tu?* ((laughs))
that one is for the briefing part the part that we need to prepare I think it is OK OK but what about the food that was discussed just now? ((laughs))
2. Wani: = >a::: *jangan lah goreng pisang minta maaf lah*<
= >a::: not banana fritters sorry to say lah <
3. Irene: //ni Irene paper work siap dah\
//I have already prepared the paperwork \
4. Sarah: /ha?\\ ((seeks clarification)) =
5. Syahira: /menda menda gini ok dah\\ ((points to a traditional sweet on the table))
/this kind of traditional sweet looks OK \\ ((points to a traditional sweet on the table))
6. Wani: = > menda menda gini takpe dah< //jangan lah goreng pisang\
= > something like this < // please lah not banana fritters\
7. Sarah: /paper work OK dah eh? \\ =
/the paper work is OK eh? \\ =
8. Irene: = ha paper work Irene dah siap Irene akan bagi dapat kelulusan bajet sebenarnya =
= yes I have already prepared the paperwork this is to gain approval for the budget =
9. Wani: = sedih ngat goreng pisang
= banana fritters would be shameful
10. Irene: tapi Irene kene reduce lah (.) dalam tu mahal (.) kene >Irene kena tanya [name of clerk] ((points to the main door)) dulu< berapa riyal =
but I have to reduce lah (.) the budget since it was quoted with a higher price (.) need > I need to ask [name of clerk] about this ((points to the main door)) < how much =

11. Sarah: = *tapi (.) tapi (.) doksoh la deh roti roti biar benda tu presentable sikit //lah*
=but (.) but (.) please lah not packed buns packed buns the food should be presentable //lah\
12. Wani: /OK\\ *kalau (.) kalau >air kita buat sendiri< (.) so budget tu lebih sikit beli kuih kan? ((looks at Sarah))* =
/OK\\ if (.) if >we prepare the drinks on our own< (.) so we could spend more on the traditional sweets, right? ((looks at Sarah)) =
13. Sarah: =mhm mhm =
14. Wani: = *ha (.) kita doksoh wi <goring pi:::sang>* =
= yes (.) we should not serve < banana fri:::tters > =
15. Eusof: = *ni berapa budget sekepala?* =
= how much is the budget per person? =
16. Irene: = *kena tanya balik sebab memang dia nak cut ha=*
= need to ask again because they really want to cut ha =
17. Sarah: *se (.) se (.) //>setakatnya\ gitulah<*
as (.) as (.)/> minimal as possible lah \
18. Wani: //RM 1.20\ *RM 1.20 rasa*
// RM 1.20\ I think its RM 1.20
19. Sarah: *ha:::? ((looks at Wani))* =
20. Wani: = RM1.20
21. Sarah: *ha:::? ((surprise tone)) nugget pun::: //siyal ser*
ha:::? ((surprise tone)) even nuggets are::: //RM1 per piece
22. Eusof: /*dua biji\\ RM 1.20*
/two pieces\\ for RM 1.20
23. Sarah: *ha? ((looks at Eusof))*
24. Syahira: *du (.) dua ((shows V sign to Eusof)) rase siya ni (.) ni pun:::*
=((points to a traditional sweets on the table))
tw (.) two ((shows handV sign to Eusof)) I think RM1 (.)
even this::: =((points to a traditional sweets on the table))
25. Irene: = *ni mahal ((laughs)) (xxx) ((points to the traditional sweets on the table))*
=this is expensive ((laughs)) (xxx) ((points to the traditional sweets on the table))
26. Wani: = *pulut lepa dakpe::: daripada er::: >menda< goring pisang*
=
= wrapped glutinous rice is better than er::: >what< banana fritters

Leadership behaviours that could be observed during the initial phases of the interaction are enacted by Sarah, in which she brings the topic back on track and asks the participants about the possible traditional sweets that they could serve during the TP briefing with the school teachers. As the discussion takes place, leadership is negotiated between Wani and Sarah, albeit Eusof demonstrates his attempts at leadership towards the end of the extract.

Prior to this interaction, Wani had suggested to the team not to serve banana fritters, which is a popular traditional Malaysian street food. Apart from Sarah, Wani contributes the most to the discussion, in comparison with other members during the initial phase of the extract (lines 1-15). She dominates the discussion by repeating her proposal not to serve banana fritters (lines 2, 6, 9 and 14). All of her turns are undertaken in a persuasive manner. For instance, in line 2, she emphasises, '*not banana fritters sorry to say lah*' where she strongly expresses her disagreement on banana fritters. The quasi-apologetic phrase, '*sorry to say*' is a satirical way of refusing and ridiculing the proposal on banana fritters, rather than conveying her genuine intention to express apology, regret or unfortunate choice. The particle '*lah*', that is stressed in a sarcastic tone, illustrates her as 'badgering and impatient' (Goddard, 1994: 149) towards the idea. In lines 6 and 9, she continues the opposition with a satirical request, '*please lah not banana fritters*' and criticises the idea of serving street food to school teachers as 'shameful'. The word '*please*' and the particle '*lah*' (line 6), again add emphasis and demand the team member not to consider the proposal as a potential decision. The turns taken by Wani illustrate her determination to influence the DM in accordance with her view, and she appears to be dominating and demanding in the attempts. In this phase, the leadership role is performed by Wani where she claims deontic authority by persuasively directing the team on what they should be doing.

Towards the end of the extract, Wani proposes a specific traditional sweet—wrapped glutinous rice—and states that the dish is better than banana fritters. It is interesting to see that she again mentions banana fritters at the end of her turn, while the other

members have moved forward with different options. As indicated by Marra (2003), one of the many strategies that can be used by non-powerful participants in DM to challenge dominance is through repetition in the solution stage. This claim is evidenced in Wani's contributions; she continues to oppose the idea of serving banana fritters continuously dominating and 'reminding' the participants of her strong rejection of the idea.

In this phase, Wani appears to be the most influential person, dominating the talk and performing a leadership role without being challenged by others. Sarah, on the other hand, shows followership with Wani's management of meaning when she explicitly agrees and conforms to the opposition (lines 11 and 13) and subsequently allows Wani to claim a leadership role.

The decision has not been made at this phase as the participants continue to seek the best solution. During the following two minutes of the discussion, Wani continues to dominate by challenging other members' proposals and reinforcing her suggestion repetitively (not shown in the extract but see Example 6.5b). Example 6.5b presents a continuation of the interaction in the search for a decision.

Example 6.5b:

Context: Prior to this stage, the members have outlined several dishes, yet they have still failed to come to a consensus.

- | | | |
|------|--------|---|
| 105. | Wani: | <i>dok eh >seriously nak wi makan menda?< kite kene beli diri dok eh?=
 like eh >seriously what are we going to serve them?< do we need to buy the food?</i> |
| 106. | Irene: | <i>= [name of clerk] (.) >tapi kita kena bagitahu< //apa::\</i>
<i>= [name of clerk] (.)> but we need to inform < // her that::\</i> |
| 107. | Wani: | <i>=/[name of clerk]\\ [name of clerk] >dok leh beri dia< beli goreng //pisang\</i>
<i>=/[name of clerk] \\ [name of clerk] > cannot allow her< to buy banana fritters</i> |

108. Sarah: >/dogleh\\ dokleh dokleh<
>/no \\ no no <
- 13 TURNS ARE OMITTED WHERE IRENE, SARA AND SYAHIRA DISCUSS THE BUDGET
121. Eusof: /kita\\ punya lecturer takdok pasangan pasangan dia yang masok masok:::?=
/our\\ colleagues do they have spouses that cook?
122. Wani: = >ke nak ni< (.) roti jala? ((nods))
= > or what about < (.) net crepes? ((nods))
123. Eusof: macam [name of a staff member] bini dia //kan boleh er (xxx) \
124. Wani: like [name of a staff member] wife //she can er (xxx) \
124. Wani: //>roti jala\ (.) ((looks at Sarah)) nak roti jala dengan kari ayam?< \ =
//> net crepes \ (.) ((looks at Sarah)) want net crepes with chicken curry? < \ =
125. Sarah: = s::: ((looks at Wani and makes a salivating sound))
//berapa utir tu kak Wani? sutir sorang? \
125. Sarah: = s::: ((looks at Wani and makes a salivating sound))
//how much kak Wani? per person?
126. Syahira: ((looks at Eusof)) //(xxx) \
127. Wani: //RM150 owk?\
//RM150 right? \
128. Eusof: ((looks at Syahira)) //laksa (.) laksa kedah\ =
((looks at Syahira)) //noodles (.) kedah noodles \ =
129. Irene: = ↑ ha laksa kedah tak kisah=
= ↑ ha kedah noodles should be fine =
130. Syahira: = ↑ ha tapi kita banyak benda pulak nak ni::: =
= ↑ ha kedah noodles are difficult to serve ::: =
131. Sarah: =banyak leceh Eusof::: benda benda gitu leceh (.) kalau (.) kalau macam (.) ((looks at Wani)) macam er mende roti jala tu OK //dia:::\
131. Sarah: = lots of stuff it is difficult Eusof::: the noodles are difficult to serve (.) if (.) ((looks at Wani)) like er things like net crepes are OK //they are::: \
132. Wani: /roti jala\\
/net crepes \\
133. Sarah: dia (.) roti jala dengan::: >kuah je< =
its (.) net crepes served with::: > curry only< =

134. Wani: = *roti jala* =
= net crepes =
135. Eusof: = *samah se* =
= 50 cents per piece =
136. Syahira: ((*looks at Wani*)) = *berapa seratus?* =
((*looks at Wani*)) = how much per piece? =
137. Wani: =100 RM150
138. =100 for RM150

Expressing her annoyance with the ongoing topic, Wani queries the participants in a sighing voice. Her use of the word '*seriously*' in the phrase urges the team to put some thought into resolving the matter quickly (line 105). She takes the chairing role that is usually performed by Sarah when she brings the team's attention to the real focus of the discussion. The fast pace of her voice, too, may presumably act as a sign of her trying to steer the discussion before anyone else takes the floor. In line 106, Irene states that they need to refer to a clerk and inform her about their choice of dessert. Without latching on, Wani takes the following turn and quickly mentions that they cannot allow the clerk to buy banana fritters. Here, she reinforces the proposal again, reminding the members that the dish is completely inappropriate.

Wani's leadership is then challenged by Eusof. In line 121, Eusof changes the direction and proposes they could seek help from their colleagues who run catering businesses. Soon after he finishes his turn, Wani proposes serving a famous traditional sweet, net crepes, for the briefing. Dismissing Eusof's proposal, the rapid pace of her voice demonstrates her taking control of the next turn (line 122). What is interesting at this point is that her rapid pace in this sequence possibly indicates her competition with Eusof to gain both the floor and Sarah's attention.

Nonetheless, Eusof is ignored as nobody responds to his proposal. This is due to the overlapping turn with Wani, who is also seeking a response from Sarah. By directly looking at Sarah, Wani reinforces and offers her proposal, interrupts Eusof and thus overlaps Eusof's contribution (line 125). Rather than inviting opinion about her proposal, Wani utilises a strong request '*do you want...*' to convey persuasiveness in

her suggestion. She tries to win Sarah's attention by integrating a proposal of implementation (i.e. serve with chicken curry), thus making her proposal more convincing and inviting. These claims could be strengthened by Sarah's response; she makes a slurping sound, 's:::' (line 125). The sound, which mimics that of drooling, presumably signifies Sarah's enthrallment towards the proposal. Stevanovic (2012) supports this claim, in her study on prosodic salience. She finds that dynamic prosody, which includes increased loudness and excessive pitch movement, signals responses of approval to a proposal. If we were to compare her contribution with Eusof's suggestion, we can explicitly see from the extract that Wani's linguistic strategies (rapid pace, latching and interruption) are more dominating and so she manages to influence the discussion.

Upon rejecting Eusof's proposal, Sarah legitimises Wani's proposal (line 131). In the following turn, Wani quickly repeats her proposal firmly (line 13) leaving no room for further negotiation or persuasion from Eusof. Here, Wani appears more influential than Sarah, as she ratifies Sarah's agreement and announces the decision to the team. The final two lines (136-137) observe Syahira and Wani advancing the proposal into the next stage by initiating a proposal of implementation on the costs that would be incurred.

This instance provides an example of Wani being the most prominent speaker in the DM process. Through her frequent re-initiation of the proposal, she emerges as the most influential person. Within these two extracts, Wani offers three proposals and, unlike Eusof, Wani does not receive any challenges against her final proposal. In fact, her proposal is authorised by Sarah, which also indicates legitimisation for the leadership role taken by Wani. This extract thus again shows that the officially assigned leader is not necessarily the only person to lead the discussion; the ordinary members can too, and they can do this by proposing issues, utilising persuasive discourse strategies to resist and actively contributing to the discussion, a similar observation is provided for the problematic dyad leader-follower (Collinson, 2017). In this instance, it is apparent that Wani's contributions are more critical through her claim of deontic authority. Sarah, on the other hand, allows and legitimises Wani's

leadership attempt which eventually manages to influence the overall discussion on the topic.

6.3 Discussion

As many leadership researchers have indicated, DM is a prime site for doing leadership and exerting influence (Cliton, 2012). This chapter has demonstrated how the DM processes of ordinary members enact leadership, through negotiation, challenging, and claiming authority during the process (Holmes, Marra and Stubbe, 2012; Clifton, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). The leadership behaviours were manifested through several discourse strategies such as giving assurance to the leader (Example 6.1), claiming epistemic and deontic authority (Examples 6.2 and 6.5), sharing leadership roles with other members (Example 6.3), re-initiating the abandoned discussion (Example 6.4) and persuasively reinforcing proposals (Example 6.5).

Irene, who was one of the more active members in the discussions, performed leadership by facilitating Sarah's in DM process. She emerged as the only person who gave assurances when Sarah was in need of confirmation (Example 6.1). By giving reassurance to the official leader, Irene then reinforced her proposal which straightforwardly received the leader's agreement. In Example 6.3, Irene was challenged by Syahira who ridiculed her proposal, but having received support from Zana, the HOD, Irene managed to claim a leadership role for herself. As Stevanovic (2012: 20) mentions, 'claiming authority ... is about others accepting someone as an authority'. Schnurr (fc), too, points out that in order for leadership to be successful, the act must be authorised by others. Irene was successful in this respect; her proposal was legitimised, influenced the DM and so, enacted leadership roles.

Considering the impact of experience on the process of DM, Syahira is the most senior member of the team, to whom Sarah often looks for expert knowledge. At some points, Syahira overpowered the official leaders' authorities. In doing leadership, the discursive strategies displayed by Syahira include challenging the leader's stance, and claiming greater epistemic primacy and deontic authority over

the topic of discussion. Example 5.2 illustrated Syahira's dominance over the discussion when she challenged the practicality of Sarah's proposal and cynically demanded Sarah to provide justification for Sarah's proposal. With the knowledge and experience that she had, Syahira presented herself as an influential expert in many phases of DM. For that reason, it could be deduced that authority to decide and leadership roles are no longer limited to only those in a stronger position, but they were shifted to those who manage to claim epistemic primacy and appear as the most influential members.

The ordinary members were also found to contribute towards DL practices through the distribution of responsibilities among their official leaders and colleagues. In Example 6.4, Irene performed leadership when she took the typical role of a leader, i.e. getting back to the participants and steering the discussion to a decision. Initially, Sarah took this role, however, in the final phase of the discussion, it was Irene who re-initiated the agenda and thus reached a decision. It is important to note that although Irene did not announce the decision (a task often associated with the leader (Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2017)), her effort in moving the agenda forward facilitated the group towards achieving a decision. Furthermore, Sarah's acceptance of Irene's proposal showed her legitimising Irene's leadership. This example is a crucial demonstration of the argument in this chapter. We know that a decision has been reached because an ordinary member of the team proposed an implementation to the decision, a way of implicitly ratifying the decision (Marra, 2003). As previous literature has pointed out (e.g. Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2017), decisions are typically ratified by the leader. This instance, however, showed that a decision made without ratification by the leader was still treated as a decision by the majority of the participants. As Irene was responsible for the task, the participants seemed to understand that the task would be executed according to Irene's proposal of implementation, after her re-initiation of the issue received considerable agreement. On the other hand, the lack of reply and ratification in the WA interaction was perceived as an acceptable norm in the team's DM and CofP practices.

Additionally, the distribution of roles could be seen in the sharing roles between the formal leader and the ordinary members. In Example 6.2, Syahira emerged as the most influential member when she managed to influence Sarah with her proposal. Although the discussion was not harmonious, we have observed that it was the ratification by Sarah that turned the proposal into a decision. Other DM studies (Clifton, 2017) have found that it can be difficult to determine who is responsible for a decision, because of multiple contributions by different members. Similarly, in Example 6.2, the different roles played by the members posed difficulties for the analysts to attribute decisions to appropriate proposers. As I have raised throughout the analysis, it was Syahira who has the most influence over the discussion, albeit at the end of the discussion, Sarah ratified and announced the decision. I argue that, although the formal leader ratified and announced the decision, the ordinary member who played pertinent roles in DM were considered as enacting successful leadership too. Hence, this instance showed that, despite the ratification made by the formal leader, the ordinary member played equally – or more important leadership roles – than the leader due to his/her greater claim on epistemic primacy (see also Chapter 7).

This team also demonstrated a different dynamic of DL practices where various activities typically associated with leadership were collaboratively performed by member with symmetrical positions in the TEFL team. This was undertaken by the ordinary members when Sarah took a back-seat role and let Syahira and Irene do the leading. In Example 6.3, Syahira and Irene shared leading and prominent roles (initiating the agenda, having control over the flow of the conversation, bringing the discussion to a close). They also challenged each other's strong views. The support received from Zana empowered Irene's proposal, which influenced the interaction and was accepted as the decision. The active contributions of these members shaped the discussion, and therefore contributed to leadership work within the team. This situation describes the characteristics of DL practices as 'collectively and independently of formal leaders' (Vine et al., 2008: 341).

On the other hand, an interesting observation on the CMC linguistic resources used by the participants were emoji, which were used to convey the sender's emotional

state (Darics, 2017). The repeated use of these CMC cues may presumably to persuade (Stevanovic, 2012: 20) and emphasise excitement. Danesi (2017: 17) reports that 'emojis [were] allowed in a court of law as evidence [of] someone's intended meaning' and Haas et al. (2011) suggest that the use of 'eye dialect' (ibid.: 386), i.e. non-standard spelling, draws attention to regional and cultural dialects. In this case, while they may suggest informality reflective of the close relationships between the members, the global symbol of 'hand sign OK' emoji that were sent repeatedly by Wani may signal conformity, a quick reply, acknowledgement of receipt or disagreement. Emoji add a further level of connotation to leadership work as they are used to strategically convey a wide range of functions (Darics, 2017).

Overall, this chapter has shown that the DM processes in this team were collaborative and distributed in different phases and contexts of the interaction. Decisions and DM were shaped by the joint construction of negotiation, challenges and consensus achieved between the leaders and ordinary members. At some points, too, the ordinary members took over the DM collaboratively with minimal contributions from the formal leaders. With ordinary members regularly occupying leadership roles, the findings have provided convincing empirical evidence for Collinson's (2017) critical evaluation on leader-follower relations. The strong opposition that the ordinary members have posed towards their formal leaders verified the claim that they are indeed capable of resistance (ibid.) and played crucial roles in DM activities. Depending on the members' capabilities and expert knowledge, leadership was distributed across the members and different people took on different roles throughout the DM processes. Such analyses, therefore, feed into the endeavour of critical leadership scholars to 'denaturalize leadership' (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014: 9). By presenting leadership as a fluid activity in interactions, we have witnessed the specific occurrence of leadership being distributed, co-constructed and negotiated, thereby, challenging the heroic notions of leadership. The findings of this chapter support the contemporary notion of leadership that emphasises 'flatter hierarchies, teamwork and [the] need for specialised knowledge and expertise' (Clifton, 2017: 45). The intricacies of leadership work that I have shown in Chapters 5 and 6 call for a discussion of the

conceptualisation of leadership practices within the team and the wide diversity of DM practices existing within two different contexts. In the following chapter, I address these issues and the broader implication of my findings with regard to notions of leadership.

7.1 Introduction

The objectives of this chapter are to answer the research questions posed in Chapter 1 and discuss the findings of the previous analysis chapters (Chapters 4-6) in light of existing research. This chapter is divided into three main parts. I start by discussing the discourse strategies that were utilised by the participants to exercise leadership, both in superior and subordinate positions. In the second part of the chapter, I discuss the discrepancies and similarities in the way DM processes are undertaken in meetings and the WA group, and further discuss the implications of these discrepancies in respect to leadership. In the final part of the chapter, I critically discuss the insights gained from the analysis of the performance of leadership in the localised context of the TEFL team, and I elucidate the implications of these findings for the conceptualisation of leadership more broadly.

The RQs as specified in Chapter 1 are:

1. How is leadership discursively ‘done’ in this team in regular meetings and on WhatsApp?
 - a. How do team members make decisions?
 - b. Who are involved in these activities?
2. Are there any differences in the way DM is done in regular meetings and in the WhatsApp group?
 - a. If so, how can we account for these differences in the way DM and leadership are done in these two contexts?
3. What do the insights about leadership and DM in this workplace mean in terms of leadership conceptualisation in a broader context?

7.2 RQ 1: The discursive construction of leadership in DM processes

This section addresses the first RQ by discussing some of the discursive strategies frequently used by the participants in their attempts to do leadership. Several conceptual issues around the enactment of leadership in DM are illuminated in the penultimate section of this chapter.

In support of the previous literature, the findings of this study have illustrated that leadership work is not only limited to the designated or hierarchical leaders, but can also be performed by ordinary members, either individually or collaboratively with other members (Vine et al., 2008, Chan and Schnurr, 2011; Svennevig and Djordjilovic, 2015; Clifton, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). These findings are not surprising as participatory DM is a growing practice in workplaces (Castor, 2005) and many companies and organisations have moved towards this, focusing on joint endeavours and empowering ordinary members to work collaboratively with officially designated leaders (Clifton, 2012; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017; Wilson, 2017).

In Chapters 5 and 6, I outlined the discursive strategies used to enact leadership by those with hierarchical authority and those with lower-ranking positions. Figure 7.1 summarises the discursive strategies for leadership employed by the leaders and the ordinary members. The figure, which is loosely based on Angouri and Angelidou (2012: 77), is adapted to better illustrate the strategies employed in reaching decisions and the logical relationship with leadership, as I have discussed previously. Angouri and Angelidou (2012) indicate in their figure that final decisions were ratified by the company's director, although the subordinates dominated the initial phases of the DM. Figure 7.1, however, specifies that decisions in the TEFL team were not always ratified by the leaders, but at times, were implicitly ratified by those in lower positions.

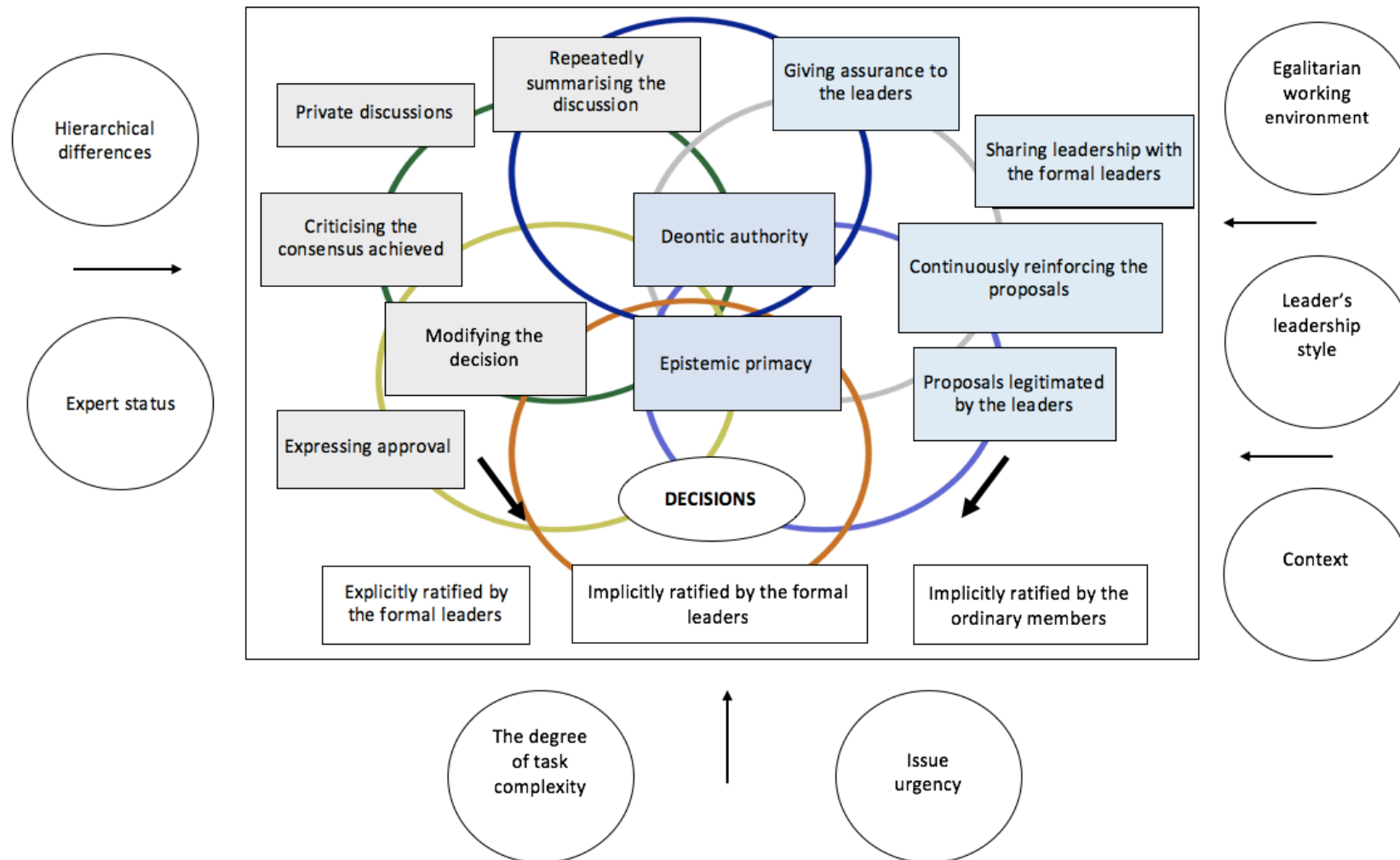


Figure 7.1 Discourse strategies for leadership by the formal leaders and the ordinary members

Figure 7.1 shows the discursive strategies for leadership performed by the formal leaders and the ordinary members. Referring to the original figure by Angouri and Angelidou's (2012), the authors have listed different strategies drawn upon in discussing suggestions. According to them, the main purpose of this figure was to show the 'range and fuzziness and subtlety of strategies' displayed by their participants, rather than representing DM processes in general (ibid.: 77). My intention of adopting the figure was not only to represent the fuzziness of the discourse strategies found in the study but also to illustrate the messiness of DM processes. The backdrop of the figure (the multiple overlapping closed circles) aptly illustrates the cyclical processes in complex DM episodes and the fluidity of leadership roles enacted in the strategies that are negotiated, distributed and challenged in DM talk. The social and contextual factors that pre-exist are the overarching factors that influence and are influenced by the co-construction of leadership practices, and these are presented on each side of the figure.

The strategies of leadership that were found to be utilised by the formal leaders are placed in light grey boxes, while the strategies performed by the ordinary members are placed in light blue boxes. The two strategies that are placed in the middle of the figure, which denote deontic authority and epistemic primacy, highlighted in blue boxes, are the strategies that are used by both groups of participants. The intention behind the different colours of the boxes used for the strategies was to illustrate the different groupings, and for ease of reading. The respective strategies are widely associated with authority (Stevanovic and Peräkylä, 2012; Svennevig and Djordjilovic, 2015) and are synonymous with leadership and managing meaning (Clifton, 2012, 2017). The figure concludes that the official leaders and ordinary members drawn on several similar strategies to do leadership, but on closer inspection, the ways that these strategies were realised by the groups of participants were relatively distinct. My analysis has shown that the official leaders claimed epistemic primacy through reformulating proposals to gain members' agreement and to judge the consequences of the potential decisions. On the other hand, deontic authority was realised through criticising the consensus reached. In contrast, the ordinary members claimed epistemic primacy and deontic authority through displaying

expertise. The strategies suggest that even within the same strategies and DM activities, the official leaders and ordinary members do leadership differently, within what is accepted in their CofP.

In illustrating the complexity of the DM processes that occurred in my dataset, I have listed the ways that decisions were reached in the figure. As indicated in the analysis chapters, the decisions reached in the team varied from explicit to implicit, and could be ratified by both the formal leaders and ordinary members. I have argued throughout Chapter 6 that on very rare occasions, decisions were ratified by the ordinary members in ways that were implicit and uncontested. This feature, which I find fascinating to point out in the figure, is important as it demonstrates my attempt to challenge the findings from the previous studies, that ratifications were only made by the formal leaders (Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2012). In Angouri and Angelidou's (2012) figure of discourse strategies in DM, the authors argue that the final decision was always ratified by the company's director. The claim was impacted on by the fact that the leader's authority affected the development of the team's discussions. In a setting like a small company where relationship may either among the family members or alliances that have worked over long periods of time, final say is, nevertheless, still within the prerogative of the company director. My context, on the other hand, is a non-traditional working team consisting of members of different positions that works both collaboratively and unilaterally.

The different contexts of Angouri and Angelidou's and my study show that, the proposed links and processes in Figure 7. 1 may not be comparable to the typical and universal ways leadership are done, especially in settings where authority and hierarchical differences are highly emphasised. Nevertheless, this figure is a good starting point for researchers in understanding the relationship between DM and leadership, as well as leadership that is performed by different participants in different hierarchical groups. Although it might not reflect or be applicable in all contexts, this figure may still be useful in comparing the strategies used by the formal leaders and the ordinary members to achieve decisions. These strategies shaped and were shaped by various personal and social relationships that exist in every context of investigation.

7.2.1 Discourse strategies displayed by the participants

Similarly to what Angouri and Angelidou (2012: 77) found in their study, the discourse strategies observed in my data were 'fuzzy and subtle'. Despite the clear distinctions that I have made between the strategies, as discussed in the previous section, I agree that these strategies are elusive and overlap with one another. We are thus able to go beyond the clear-cut categories of leadership activities and DM (e.g. epistemic primacy, deontic authority and ratification as belonging to the formal leader or the subordinates only) and reveal a more complex relationship of construction of meaning and discourse strategies in DM.

The discourse strategies that advanced the discussions towards a decision include repeatedly summarising the discussion, granting approval on proposals (Marra, 2003), modifying the ratified decisions, excluding the voice of other participants and claiming epistemic and deontic authority. These strategies were the identifiable discursive patterns that characterised the ways leaders enacted leadership within DM processes. They were the strategies (with the exception of criticising the consensus) that enabled the leaders to have the final say and the utmost authority over DM, hence exercising leadership. Another explicit (and prevalent) way to claim epistemic primacy by these formal leaders was through displaying expertise and knowledge of the topic under discussion. By evaluating practicality, expressing approval and ratifying the proposals in order to mark them as decisions, Sarah and Zana performed leadership within the roles that were expected of them (Marra, 2003; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2012).

The speech act that did not advance the discussion towards decisions, yet highlighted the authority of the leaders, was criticising the consensus reached. For example, in Example 5.6 (Chapter 5), although the discursive strategy of criticising the members' consensus did not help Zana to have the final say in the decision, it does not mean that her leadership was not successful. Quite the opposite – her authority was portrayed through the criticisms and the claim of deontic authority by giving directives to the ordinary members after the long discussion that the team had during her absence. Despite ambiguous messages that she received from Wani by

emoji upon her criticisms, the emoji have also indicated that she received compliance from Wani, albeit reticently. The consensus that the ordinary members managed to reach while both Sarah and Zana were temporarily absent was discarded, as Sarah stepped up with a decision derived from a private discussion that she had with Eusof. This instance no doubt shows that the leader controls the decision, claiming a greater deontic authority and a 'superior state of knowledge' (Clifton, 2017: 65) (i.e. her knowledge of what was best in order to execute the decision) and thus has most influence in the DM. Stevanovic and Peräkylä (2012: 317) argue that 'deontic authority resembles epistemic authority in many ways'. Based on their findings, these strategies are claimed and negotiated implicitly with very little evidence of imperatives or assertive modal verbs such as 'must' and 'ought'. This is similar to what I have found in my data, in that Zana claimed deontic authority to a greater degree when she made an authoritative move and criticised the consensus reached by the ordinary members. Her criticisms, however, were mitigated through the use of humour, informal spellings, abbreviations and emoji. The way these strategies were exerted in the dataset shows that Zana's leadership behaviours shaped and were shaped by the workplace norms and acceptable practices within this CoFP.

The ordinary members, on the other hand, claimed epistemic and deontic authority by displaying expertise and reinforcing proposals in a persuasive manner. These strategies were found to be enacted by the participants who were older, rather than the junior members. This situation may be due to the older members' experience from previous tasks and a certain degree of authority within the team. Being older and having worked for longer in the department than the formal leader, Syahira and Wani were found to enact authority, also referred to as 'expert power' (Kotthoff, 1997; Marra, 2003: 172), on the issues that they had more knowledge of than others. A study by Kotthoff (1997) finds that having expertise in television discussions is not located with only one person but rather it is distributed. She mentions, 'expert roles are often remaining stable throughout the entire duration of conversation, but at other times, they are only temporary' (ibid.: 165). Just like leadership, expertise is not static but is constantly negotiated and those who are able to demonstrate superior knowledge can influence the discussion. In comparison to chairs and

managers whose participation in making decisions is expected, the participation of experts is contingent (Marra, 2003). For this reason, experts typically dominate in discussions that are most relevant to their knowledge, and at times, they override the contributions of the formal leaders and junior members.

My analysis has prevalently shown that most instances of having a final say were announced by the leaders, either by Sarah or Zana, which is in accordance with what previous studies have shown. Decision announcing and ratification are the privilege of those with authority (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003; Marra, 2003; Holmes and Marra, 2004; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2017) and decisions will not be counted as such unless they are announced by 'somebody incumbent of the correct identity' (Clifton, 2009: 61).

However, my findings have demonstrated that, at times, it was the ordinary members who had the final say on the decision. A particular instance is referred to in Example 6.4 (Chapter 6) from the WA discussion. In this instance, Irene initiated the proposal of implementation while re-raising the issue that was brought up by Sarah. The other participants, including Sarah, agreed with the implementation, but the issue was not ratified. Marra (2003: 108) claims that when a decision is not explicitly ratified, the decision can be identified through a proposal of implementation. The proposal of implementation does not necessarily occur at the end of the discussion but can be initiated at any point in the DM process. Marra's claim supports my argument that a decision is still achieved even though it lacks ratification. Besides, the absence of further discussion and the actual realisation of the proposal of implementation strengthen the argument that a decision has indeed been reached. The realisation of the proposal also shows that the work has been successfully executed. This finding subsequently showed that it was Irene who had the final say, and therefore contested previous studies that suggested that only the formal leaders held legitimacy over the final say of decisions (Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2012). Angouri and Angelidou (2012), for instance, observe that the director of the company they studied was the sole decision maker. Although the discussions included an experienced, knowledgeable staff member who spoke 'in the same strong language' (ibid.: 70) as the leader, the analysis indicated that formal

status superseded expertise. In a context more closely related to the TEFL team, Yeung (2004), in her study on participative DM, summarises how the role of articulating and issuing the final decision was undertaken by the manager. Holmes and Marra's (2004) study on managing conflict in meetings, finds that imposing a decision is a strategy employed by the leader to resolve conflict in an authoritative manner. Clifton (2017: 48) looks at DM in a management meeting in a school setting, observing that all participants, regardless of their position, contributed to the 'management of meaning on a turn by turn basis'. The active contributions by these participants thus posed a challenge for analysts in attempting to weigh up 'who has the most salient role in this... since everybody is involved in the process of reciprocal influence' (ibid.: 65). Eventually, Clifton concludes that the leader managed to position herself as the decision announcer and so, claimed the identity of leader. These studies provide further evidence that the role of announcing and ratifying decisions is within the prerogative of the formal leaders.

The instance of having the final say by the ordinary members, although only occurring once in my dataset, demonstrates that the roles of the subordinates are as important as the leaders. Not only did they contribute to the DM processes, but at times they also manoeuvred the discussion towards the decision and made proposals to implement the decision by way of moving the discussion forward. While other studies still focus solely on the idea that the formal leaders own the final say, I argue that this speech act could also be performed by the ordinary members. During an interview with Sarah, she indicated that final decisions would usually be referred to Zana, but for decisions regarding more trivial or low-priority responses, all members were encouraged to contribute or decide. The instance described above aptly illustrates that the ordinary members could have a final say and thus contribute significantly to the performance of leadership.

Aside from having the final say, the subordinates' discourse strategies for exercising leadership include giving assurance to the leaders, claiming epistemic primacy, getting proposals legitimised by the leaders, sharing leadership roles with leaders and other members and continuously reinforcing the proposals. Other studies have observed that discourse strategies by members in the subordinate positions lead to

‘interactional asymmetries’ in conversation (Wodak et al., 2011: 595), empower the subordinates in DM to voice opposing viewpoints (Choi and Schnurr, 2014: 31), claim epistemic primacy (Clifton, 2017) and move the agenda forward (Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). The enactment of their leadership is emergent, as opposed to the assumed responsibilities of the leaders for some activities in DM processes. Despite considerable instances of leadership enacted by those in subordinate positions, it is important not to over-generalise all attempts made by these members as the doing of leadership.

My study adopted the definition of leadership outlined by Clifton (2012): leadership as influencing the management of meaning. Those who have the most influence over the interaction may emerge as the leaders and claim the leadership identity for themselves. The definition, however, may be vague and all-encompassing, causing analysts to run the risk of identifying every act as leadership behaviour. It may be problematic to label all behaviours as leadership, as this makes the assumption that leadership is broad, accessible and can be achieved successfully by anyone. While I do agree to some extent that everyone could potentially do leadership, the enactment of leadership requires more than being able to perform it. Parallel to this, Schnurr (fc) differentiates between ‘leadership and ‘ordinary’ meaning making’. In bridging this gap, she notes that attempts to do leadership need to be legitimised by others for the acts to be considered successful leadership, either by those in positions of authority or ordinary group members. A clear instance of successful leadership by ordinary members is indicated in Chapter 6 (Example 6.3). Irene exercised leadership when she managed to gain approval for her decision from Zana. Throughout the discussion, Irene was challenged by Syahira who, at the same time, reinforced her own proposal. With Zana’s brief turns taken throughout the discussion, it was Irene’s proposal that was supported by Zana. Zana did this by (minimally) reinforcing Irene’s proposal, which can be seen in her mitigations and clarifying questions, directed towards Irene. In contrast, Syahira did not receive any support from Zana and, in fact, she was challenged by Irene and Zana, who were clearly resisting her leadership move. The authorisation by Zana of Irene’s proposal subsequently won the discussion and legitimised her leadership attempts.

Syahira, who negotiated, challenged and acquiesced to Irene's proposal, also played an important role in this instance. The discussion was moved towards a decision after Syahira signalled her understanding of Irene's argument and her role here resembles a gatekeeper, ensuring that Irene's contribution aligned with what was deemed an appropriate solution to the issue discussed. Yeung (2004) investigated gatekeeping in DM, and states that it is a defensive act where managers who are the gatekeepers ensure that the views of the subordinates are in line with organisational principles. Syahira's defensive stance in challenging a more junior colleague, Irene, was another way of her claiming superiority in knowledge and leadership. However, with the authorisation received from Zana on Irene's proposal, we can distinguish between the influential speaker, whose proposal is legitimised by the official designated leaders and who emerged as the most influential and thus successfully claimed a leadership role, compared with the members whose contributions were just, presumably, co-authoring the meaning making. Apart from this example, I have limited evidence of this group of ordinary participants having the final say, and being legitimised by the formal leaders for their leadership attempts.

My dataset also shows the subordinate members enacting leadership by leading the discussion with minimal contribution from the hierarchical leaders. Using the same instance (Example 6.3), the example shows that the participants led independently, while Sarah took a back-seat role, watching the discussion take place without interrupting at all. Zana, on the other hand, was involved minimally when she legitimised the contributions by Irene. The rest of the discussion was jointly managed by Irene and Syahira. The enactment of leadership by these ordinary members may have been due to the expert knowledge that they both had on the issue. It is not surprising that the participants who were superior in knowledge dominated the discussions in areas in which they were well-versed; on the flip side, there might have been a lack of ability or experience among those in higher positions. This is verified by Sarah who mentioned that Irene was knowledgeable in all matters in respect to TP and Syahira had the most experience in most of the team's tasks.

In the next section, I review the speech act of decision ratification undertaken by the formal leaders, and discuss how it affects the way we view leadership.

7.2.2 Decision ratification and leadership

As indicated by previous researchers, decision ratification is a prerogative of the hierarchical leaders (Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2017). In a study on DL by Clifton (2017), he highlights the varying degrees of contribution made by all members on a turn-by-turn basis. I could not agree more with Clifton (2017) who states that determining the most influential person(s) in DM is challenging when every participant actively attempts to fix the meaning of the DM discussions. Towards the end of his article, albeit making clear that attributing a leader identity to the one who manages to announce decisions would overlook others' contributions, Clifton claims that the leader who successfully announces the decision 'has *most* influence in managing meaning' (ibid.: 65, emphasis in original).

Referring to my data, there are instances where the leaders and those in the lower ranks collaborated in DM, with both almost equally and actively participating in the discussion by reinforcing their own proposals. The final remarks were ratified and announced by Sarah or Zana. In more critical instances, the ordinary members dominated the interaction and received support from others who reinforced their proposals. The leaders, on the other hand, played a minimal part in the decision, yet performed leadership through summarising and announcing the decisions. Here, it is important to bring the notion of DL practices to the fore.

In instances where the leaders and ordinary members jointly authored decisions, I agree with Clifton (2017) that leadership is attributed to the individual who announces the decision, even when there have been active contributions from ordinary members. Conversely, for more critical examples, I support Choi and Schnurr (2014: 32), who argue that 'different individuals took over the responsibility of leading the team ... at different points in the meeting'. The responsibilities of ratification and announcing of decisions no doubt indicate the superior status of the ratifier and announcer of a (final) decision. However, to claim that only leaders have successfully do leadership, because they announce the decisions, seems to overlook the contributions made by the subordinates who reinforce their own proposals and advance the discussion to reach a decision. This argument goes beyond identifying

the task of ratifying and announcing decisions as (ultimate and) successful leadership work in DM; it also emphasises the equally important leadership work that takes place throughout a DM episode. I acknowledge that the context and circumstance of leadership in my study and Clifton's are relatively different. In contrast to Clifton's findings, the specific instance (Example 6.5) showed it was the formal leaders who played minimal leadership activities while the ordinary participant, Wani, enacted more influential leadership activities. Many of these attempts were supported by other members and the formal leader. This was reflected when Syahira disagreed with Eusof's proposal and Syahira and Sarah subsequently reinforced Wani's proposal. Although Sarah evaluated and expressed her approval on the suggestions that were put forward (which, at the same time, showed her authority), it was Wani who dominated the discussion, and it was her proposals that were reinforced by other members. Wani's authority can also be considered as her performing (successful) leadership, as her attempts to influence the decision were authorised and legitimised. In a study by Schnurr et al. (2017: 106-107), the authors present an example of a subordinate having a final word on the issue discussed. Despite acknowledging the collaborative work undertaken by the team members in order to oppose the authority of the leader, the authors do not make any claims as to whether leadership is legitimised by the formal leader.

I have indicated previously that decisions can also be announced by ordinary members, and the tasks of ratifying and announcing a decision are essential because they indicate to the participants that the discussion has ended. Nonetheless, less participative leaders who undertake this task could be seen to be fulfilling the requirements of the role of the leader in the DM process. Simply put, the task of ratifying and announcing a decision is similar to the task of opening a discussion which is often – if not always – considered the responsibility of the chair. In cases where the DM process involves active involvement from ordinary members as well as the formal leader who announces the final decision, we must acknowledge that the work of ratifying and announcing the decisions does not necessarily indicate that the leader has the most influence. Instead, we can see that the performance of this speech act is a part of the leadership activities that are expected of the formal leader.

By acknowledging the contributions of ordinary members who influenced the DM process but did not explicitly ratify the decisions as successful leadership, we can also recognise the strategies that are used by the ordinary members to appear influential, which might provide a more insightful view of leadership. Simultaneously, such recognition highlights DL practices between the formal leaders and the ordinary members typical of this team, which is reflective of their close relationship developed over time through previous collaboration at work.

Comparatively, it is difficult to back up my argument with work by other scholars, because there is lack of analysis of leadership work done by the ordinary members of a group whose formal leaders do not contribute to the discussion but who ratify the decisions. Most studies only generate insights into the discursive leadership behaviours by the ordinary members that are not legitimised (Schnurr et al., 2017), or the formal leaders who claimed to be most influential due to the enactment of ratification and announcing the decision (Clifton, 2017), hence these bring us to circular argumentation. There is, however, a substantial number of studies that adequately highlight the work of team members within situations of the formal leaders lacking participation; nonetheless, many of them investigated leadership that is enacted and shared among equals. For instance, Schnurr and Zayts (2017: 76) describe leadership responsibilities between the manager and co-founder of a company; Vine et al. (2008) present leadership work by leaders in three different organisations; and Wilson (2017) compares the leadership done by both the head coach and assistant coach, but not the collective performance of leadership by the leader and subordinates (cf Baxter, 2014). Hence, to strengthen the conceptualisation of leadership and to convincingly prove that leadership activities other than ratification and announcing can be very influential, we need stronger evidence that can demonstrate not only the leadership work that is done by these members, but also the legitimisation given by the formal leaders to their leadership attempts. Hitherto, one of the main conclusions of this study is that most influential leadership behaviours include impactful contributions that receive support and legitimisation from others, although they do not own the final say of the decisions.

In answering the first RQ, it can be summarised that the way the TEFL team members make decisions can be authoritative or distributive, or both, depending on the processes of DM. The leaders and ordinary members draw on relatively distinct strategies to influence the DM processes, while at other times, participants who are expert in certain topics make claims for epistemic primacy and deontic authority. Leadership roles are taken because 'no single individual alone could conceivably bridge the sources of influence and expertise' to move DM forward (Denis, Langley and Sergi, 2015: 272).

7.3 RQ 2: DM in meetings and WA

This section discusses the structural properties of DM processes that occurred within meetings and the WA group, and considers in what ways the processes in these contexts are different from and similar to each other. Further, I discuss how the discrepancies influence the construction of leadership within the team.

The members of the team claimed that meetings and WA were used most prominently in comparison with other modes of communication. Sometimes WA was used in the meetings, which was generally considered to be socially acceptable. This situation can be seen in M4, where Sarah, who was present in the meeting, contacted Syahira, who was absent, through WA to gain important information. Throughout the communication process, all members had access to the messages and so witnessed and benefited from the responses supplied by Syahira. Also known as 'multitask[ing] or multi-communicat[ing]' (Darics, 2016: 69), these instances show that communication technologies enabled the participants to undertake several conversations concurrently, without the topics necessarily connecting to each other. The examples also strengthen the claims made by Sarah, Syahira and Irene during the interviews that the WA group was used prevalently when immediate feedback and actions were required.

7.3.1 Discrepancies between meetings and WA in DM processes

As evidenced by the analysis presented so far in this thesis, it is clear that decisions and DM were done not only in face-to-face meetings but also in the participants'

informal communication group, the WA group. Given the importance of meetings and the ubiquitous uses of WA in DM, I have summarised in Table 7.1 the similarities and differences in the ways that DM processes were constructed in these two contexts.

CHARACTERISTICS	MEETINGS	WA
1. Discussion structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often adheres to the typical structure of a business meeting with an opening, transition and closing sequences (Marra, 2008). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal and seemingly conversation-like. Does not follow the orderly process of a meeting.
2. DM processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straightforward to highly complex. Time-consuming due to topic deviation or interruption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straightforward to highly complex. Straightforward processes are more prevalent. Delayed responses due to the asynchronous nature of the context.
3. Degree of participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All members participate except those absent from meetings. Democratic and autonomous. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only members who respond to the issues participate. Democratic and autonomous.¹⁶

Table 7.1 Differences and similarities in DM processes in meetings and WA group

Meetings are a synchronous mode of communication where responses, negotiations and information are exchanged in real-time. WA, on the other hand, is a form of both asynchronous and synchronous multi-party interaction, where exchanges occur between the participants regardless of their location, either in real-time or later. These differences thus have a dramatic impact on how DM processes were enacted, and the following section illustrates this.

¹⁶ The participation in the WA messages could not be easily identified due to several factors (see the section on degree of participation where I elaborate the factors that contribute to this complexity).

Discussion structure

Generally in the TEFL team, the structure of the discussions in meetings adhered to the generic organisation of a meeting, although their team meetings can be described as having a more casual dynamic in terms of communication style. As indicated by Marra (2008), a typical meeting structure of a business meeting consists of an opening sequence, transitions and closing sequence. There were agendas steering the team's discussions, and Sarah took on the chairing role in the opening and closing segments. In Chapter 4, I have shown that DM in meetings occasionally adhered to the structure of meetings as addressed by Marra, particularly when the processes were more straightforward. Nevertheless, in other types of DM, the processes slightly 'violated' the typical structure, through the use of cycling and recycling DM steps and decision ratifications that were done implicitly.

In WA, the discussions did not adhere to the typical format of face-to-face meetings; rather the WA group discussions bear some resemblance to an informal chat. The discussions were emergent and not bound by a chair, agenda, space or time. Unlike other genres of technological communication such as emails, the WA discussions lacked introductory preambles and proper closings. WA messages were continuous in a never ending thread, in which most of the conversations were the continuation of previous discussions. Any discussion could be freely initiated by any of the participants at any time, according to the initiators' availability, and the degree of urgency of the issues. Furthermore, when issues were critical, discussions would be initiated regardless of the time of day or night, that might be deemed inappropriate to contact colleagues in some organisations. The flexibility and informality of WA discussions could be clearly seen through messages that were sent at odd hours, such as after working hours, late evenings or during weekends. Interestingly, in the interviews conducted with the participants, not one indicated that they were disturbed by messages sent at these times. At the CofP level, these informal ways of communication at work form accepted norms in this team.

Other informal features observed in the WA group include typographic and orthographic writing strategies, such as non-standard capitalisation, initialism,

relaxed spelling, and semiotic resources such as emoji. These features represented the team's friendliness and informality, and are reflective of the team's discursive practices. The use of such cues in the team's interactional patterns seems to be at odds with the characteristics of a formal business meeting. However, such features are somewhat expected, given that many researchers have claimed that CMC now lacks formality compared to face-to-face discussions (Dubrovsky et al., 1991; Darics, 2017).

DM processes

As indicated in Chapter 4, decisions that occurred in the meetings ranged from simple to highly complex processes. In contrast, the DM processes in the WA group were less varied, with straightforward processes occurring predominantly. The prevalent occurrence of straightforward DM processes in the WA group are reflective of its main purposes: to make quick decisions, give confirmation or approval, and provide information regarding the issues raised. Interestingly, in the WA group we can observe intertextuality between the WA messages and face-to-face meetings with regards to the DM processes. The continuous processes of DM and changes of decisions occurred from one context to another show that decisions are continuously faced with adjustments of tasks and situations. Apart from that, WA allows analysts to observe decisions being implemented and that the implementation acts for keeping abreast of the latest update of the decisions. This is a realisation that does not often occur in the face-to-face meetings. There were quite a substantial number of instances in the WA where proposals were implemented in the group. One of the instances Eusof and Sarah resolved over the WA group was the issue of photocopying the TP log books, and as a result of their quick discussion, they met up and headed to several photocopying shops. In the WA discussion, the participants were able to communicate despite not being in the same physical location. In fact, the participants were separated by time and/or space and yet were able to act upon the proposals when needed. In Section 7.3.2, I discuss further how the DM typologies in meetings and WA affect the DL practices within the team.

Degree of participation

Another difference between DM in meetings and the WA group that was observed includes the varying levels of participation in these two contexts. In meetings, there was clearly active and peripheral participation from the members through the turns taken and the paralinguistic cues that were present throughout. We can conclude that almost all the turns taken in the face-to-face meetings indicated the participants' voluntary participation, while the non-verbal and paralinguistic cues emphasised or added to their meaning. These cues also facilitated the conveyance and understanding of critical information between members who participated less, were quiet or discreet. In the WA group, observing and understanding the level of participation is far more complex. In text-based interactions, 'people do not share the same physical environment and are restricted to written communication' and so 'all understanding must be achieved through their typed messages' (Darics, 2016: 2). We are dependent on their words and the semiotic resources that accompany them, or are sent independently, to make sense of online interactions. Yet the participation of the members cannot entirely be judged based on these cues. This is due to two reasons. Firstly, in text-based interactions, the participants can browse the postings without replying or contributing to the discussions themselves. In this case, the participants who read the messages can choose to be deliberately 'silent members' (Yeow, Johnson and Faraj, 2006: 968) or 'lurkers' (Bronstein et al., 2016; Yeow et al., 2016). Adding to this complexity, WA's 'blue ticks' feature indicates when everyone in the group has read the message, but it is problematic to claim that full participation has been achieved just because of this feature. This is because there are differences in the times that participants read the messages; some may read the messages immediately while others do not look at them for several hours. Hence this factor impacts on the participation and leadership dynamics in the WA group. Take, for instance, Example 5.6 (Chapter 5), where Zana joined the discussion approximately four hours later, by which time Sarah and Irene had discontinued their participation (based on their lack of replies). This shows that participation in the DM discussions in the WA group is varied, unsustainable and fluctuates according to time gaps. Darics (2016) reports findings of a survey on virtual challenges faced by people working

online and the results inform that virtual communication pose difficulty in establishing rapport and trust and collegiality. The findings are particularly relevant to virtual groups that communicate mainly through CMC. The TEFL team, on the other hand, used WA as an addition to their method of interacting. The team has already established camaraderie, rapport and trust during their previous work experience but is still experiencing lack of participation in their discussions.

Secondly, the issue of time remains an important factor, and the time stamps that highlight quick responses can be meaningful to the discussion. Taking the same extract, Example 5.6, the participation of the active members had ceased by the time Zana joined the discussion. The gaps in time between messages discouraged some of the members' participation. Thereby when a late-comer joined the discussion, it was difficult to determine participation since other members had left the discussion. As Darics (2016) contends, online interactions are constructed when both participants are logged on simultaneously and engaged in a chat. Do we then identify participation in DM processes as the whole discussion, even when there are late-comers, or do we perceive participation in DM processes according to the specific phases where consensus was reached? It is safer to conclude that the participation in DM in WA groups cannot be straightforwardly indicated by the participants' responses; other factors such as urgency of the issues, lurking, and time differences influence the participation of the members in WA discussions and leadership practices within the team (see also Section 7.3.2).

7.3.2 Making sense of the discrepancies in leadership

To illustrate further how leadership is influenced by the context in which it is enacted, I elaborate on the following aspects: synchronicity and asynchronicity, participation and lurking, and the use of non-verbal cues in online interactions.

Synchronicity-asynchronicity boundaries

One of the most obvious features that differentiated between face-to-face meetings and WA is their synchronous and asynchronous nature, respectively. Assuming that emails and IM are the closest genre of communication to the contemporary WA app,

several researchers have discovered that virtual communication reduces social barriers and eases communication for everyone, regardless of their hierarchical levels (Kiesler Siegel and McGuire, 1984; Dubrovsky et al., 1991; Allen, 1995). Dubrovsky et al. (1991) notice increased participation and 'assertiveness' among inexpert members and a significant decline in the influence of high-status members. They assert that communication technologies 'attenuate the social-contextual cues available in face-to-face conversation' (1991: 123) and use the term 'equali[s]ation phenomenon' (ibid.: 136) to refer to the grey areas of status and expertise in virtual communication. Bouhnik and Deshen (2014: 228) investigate the use of WA in schools and claim that the WA app has 'crossed the dividing lines between the teachers and the students'. Similarly, Darics (2017) finds that IM is effective for the negotiation of power differences. Kiesler et al. (1984: 1125) ascertain that the absence of non-verbal behaviour in computer communication might 'weaken social influence'.

The above research, along with the asynchronous nature of communication technologies, may suggest that the WA app is may be a more comfortable context for ordinary members to do leadership. This is because the WA app provide flexibility and accessibility for all members to initiate conversation, possibly without the fear of judgement or other environmental factors that might affect their behaviour, like in a face-to-face setting. Unlike meetings where participants either need to compete for their speaking turns or be allocated turns, WA is much more open for ordinary members specifically to take on leadership roles; status and expertise become less apparent in online environments. The WA platform is less restricted by authority and turn allocation, and thus offers opportunities for members to take on leadership at any point. Although these arguments are convincing, the data from my study do not appear to illustrate these assumptions. For leadership to take place in the WA group, the participants should respond, challenge and/or contribute to the discussions to encourage leadership discourse to be discursively (co)constructed. The WA data revealed abundant instances of leadership, but leadership attempts by ordinary members were not as rich as when they occurred in synchronous interactions such as meetings. Many of the WA interactions were between the leaders and those

participants who were specifically involved with the issue raised. Consequently, leadership was predominantly performed between Sarah and Zana, especially in routine DM which often occurred within straightforward DM processes. This observation is not surprising as straightforward decisions are widely associated with those in authority, such as the chairs and managers (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003). What is unexpected from my WA data is that instances of leadership did not seem to be as plentiful as originally anticipated. Taken together, the claim that written-based communication offers more opportunities for leadership – because this type of communication reduces communication modalities (Dubrovsky et al., 1991) – does not seem to apply in my findings. Within this team's virtual platform, leadership is not often undertaken by ordinary members. The potential factors that contribute to this issue are explicated in the following section.

Social inattention

Text-based interactions are less pressured (Warkentin et al., 1997), 'scrollable and searchable' (Darics, 2016: 68), and 'perpetuated by voluntary contributions' (Smith, 2006: 967). These features have led to peripheral participation among the group members. In online communication, time pressures are not necessarily present – as they are in synchronous meetings. Participants can take the time to think before conveying their responses, and they can alter their responses as many times as desired to achieve clarity (Dubrovsky et al., 1991). In addition, the moving screens, rapid exchange of texts and searchable messages have reduced feedback and led 'people to forget that messages are communications', 'forget the nature and size of their audience or even that their communications will be read' (Dubrovsky et al., 1991: 124). With the increasing 'social inattention' (ibid.) that occurs in online communication, participants may have felt less temporally pressured to provide their opinion on the issues posted in the WA group. These claims are verified in a situation where the members did not respond to Sarah's planning regarding a meeting, which consequently led Sarah to re-initiate and wait for responses before she coordinated the responses given. Such an instance indicates that even for low-priority requests, the DM process took more time for the team to reach a decision. However, in critical instances, such as problems with students during the TP, all members (except for

Syahira) actively participated after the issue was first initiated and decisions were made swiftly. For this reason, it is observed that the responses of the participants in the WA group were given at their convenience, and the capacity for immediate feedback may have been influenced by the urgency of the issues.

As a consequence, social inattention had a dramatic impact on how DM processes were constructed and leadership was enacted. The example mentioned above clearly shows that the lack of response required the formal leader to take on further leadership roles by re-establishing the discussions and eliciting responses from other members at times when responses were not given. In meetings where every member was in one place, Sarah had the authority to allocate turns and direct the participants in order to elicit their responses. The meetings involved more members participating and contributing to the discussions, and taking up leadership roles, hence the face-to-face meetings provided more observation for leadership activities to be distributed. Against this backdrop, we could also conclude that Sarah lost control over the participation of the members when they were separated by space and time. She also needed to be more persistent to elicit responses and ensure that the discussions on WA were finalised. This situation is in line with what Zimmermann et al. (2008) find in their study. The participants who are leaders of global virtual teams mention that they are responsible for ensuring that the members receive the same information. The team members, on the other hand, indeed consider that their leader should be the one who 'stimulates information sharing among team members' and 'has a very organized way of interacting with team members' (ibid.: 330). This finding shows that 'it is a greater challenge for leaders to promote group identification in a virtual setting than it is in a face-to-face setting' (ibid.: 331). Nonetheless, it is worth highlighting the instances where Irene took the leadership role of re-initiating issues to bring the conversation to a close and Wani took the lead while Sarah was temporarily away (See Chapter 5, Example 5.3 and Chapter 6, Example 6.4). With such instances that occurred less frequently in the WA group, leadership was still distributed across the members of the group.

Lurking phenomenon and status equalisation

In addition to the lack of participation, the behaviour known as lurking may justify the scarce instances of leadership among the ordinary members in the WA group. In this team, the obvious lurker was Syahira, who was deliberately lurking whenever discussions took place. This is confirmed by a claim she made during the interview, where she mentioned that she would only respond to important matters that required her opinion:

... but usually it is Whatsapp so I just read but **I don't respond unless it really required my::: response a::: then I will respond**

As the oldest member in the team, her age could be a contributing factor to her unfamiliarity with the WA interfaces, which could explain the lack of her participation. This presumption is supported by Bieswanger (2013: 463), who summarised that technological constraints, such as the 'limited screen size of computers and mobile phones and the awkwardness of in-putting text messages via a mobile phone keypad', impact on participation in an online interaction. Additionally, she claimed that her lack of participation was also due to limited Internet connection and the triviality of issues that normally required responses from the people in charge of them. Personally, she preferred to be contacted through phone calls in situations where her contribution was urgently needed. Align with Bronstein et al. (2016), I agree that participation in virtual communication is also influenced by the personality traits of the user.

Such lurking phenomena indicate a relationship between lurking, DM and leadership. Specifically, lurking has a significant moderating effect on the way DM and leadership are done. To illustrate this, let us compare Syahira's participation within the two contexts under investigation. In the meetings, Syahira was one of the senior members who contributed most actively to the discussions and performed several crucial leadership roles. In the WA group, however, she only responded three times throughout the WA data collection, and all these contributions were merely asking for confirmation. Although Syahira's reticence or very sparse posting did not threaten the 'group's membership retention' (Yeow et al., 2006: 967), her persistent

lack of involvement, however, actually endangered the continuity of discussions at times as it reduced the potential leadership work that could be (co-) constructed by her and the other members. Lurking, then, can be seen as one of the factors that contributed to the lack of leadership roles being taken and distributed in online interactions within this team. The findings are consistent with Purvanova and Bono (2009) who in their study find that behaviours 'do change in context'. These authors, who investigate transformational leadership in face-to-face and virtual contexts, suggest that several leaders enact a higher level of transformational behaviours in virtual teams, while others decrease them or remain neutral.


Now let us analyse Irene's participation in the meetings and the WA group. Irene was one of the members who actively contributed in the face-to-face meetings. As verified by Sarah during the interviews, Irene was often consulted on tasks related to the TP and this simultaneously reinforces the fact that leadership practices in this team were distributed among the members. In Chapter 6, we observed the active role that Irene played when her expertise and responsibilities were relevant to the issues raised. In contrast, her participation in the WA group was minimal. Irene was observed to engage with critical issues and when she was in need of confirmation on emergent issues. Throughout the period in which the TP was discussed in the WA group, Irene showed more reserved behaviour and it was the senior members, i.e. Zana, Sarah and Wani, who provided the relevant knowledge on these topics. Irene was relatively inexperienced in relation to the emergent issues of TP and this resulted in her minimal participation in the WA group. Even when she was involved in the WA discussions, her contributions were less dominating than the behaviours she had shown in the meetings. In the meetings, she reported on multiple issues, displayed her expertise, provided information and subsequently took on leadership roles. Irene's participation within these two investigated contexts does not seem to align with Dubrovsky et al.'s (1991) notion of status equalisation in computer mediated contexts. It may be true that status seems to be diminished in written contexts, which may encourage those in lower positions to take on leadership roles more freely. Nonetheless, expertise remains an important factor for leadership regardless of the interactional contexts of DM.

Syahira's and Irene's levels of participation give insights into the leadership practices within the TEFL team. Their minimal participation in the WA group subsequently reduced negotiations and the potential construction and distribution of leadership roles among the ordinary members. Consequently, status differences were not minimised. Instead, status differences were widened between the formal leaders and the ordinary members as evidenced in the domination of the formal leaders in most of the WA discussions and leadership roles taken by them. Viewed together, this can suggest that the people who dominated the DM in meetings did not necessarily display the same behaviour in online discussions, thus impacting on the dynamics of DM and leadership practices within the team's virtual communication. These observations provide convincing evidences for viewing leadership as a distributed activity and that its emergence is influenced by contextual and social demands. To my knowledge, very little research has investigated leadership practices in two different contexts, hence this thesis contributes to these under-researched areas of leadership

Non-verbal cues

The paralinguistic cues seen both in meetings and the WA group are important as they facilitate understanding and disambiguate meaning in the analysis of the WA data. While I do not specifically focus on paralinguistic cues in the meetings, they are useful to provide meaning in a context where verbal cues are absent. In text-based communication, paralinguistic cues are replaced with graphical features such as capital letters, emoji and time stamps, to name a few (Yeoh, 2015; Darics, 2016). These features exist without compromising the ability of virtual communication to communicate rich information (Yeoh, 2015). In Chapter 6, I have illustrated how online cues such as time stamps and emoji aided in identifying leadership moves by the ordinary members. In Example 6.5 (Chapter 6), Wani tried to assert her proposal by competitively posting her proposals at the same time as Sarah's contributions. Being the formal leader, Sarah managed to resist Wani's proposals and she achieved this by providing prompt replies. The close time stamps between Sarah and Wani represent their endeavour to influence the DM process, in which this feature is identical as competing for turns in a face-to-face conversation. Darics (2016) claims

that emails that received immediate response might indicate the availability of the recipient to respond, even for non-urgent tasks. In asynchronous and synchronous interaction like WA, it could be argued that the close time stamps between the interactants may signify the availabilities of these members to contribute (and compete) in DM and leadership simultaneously. This supports Darics (2017), who found that high typing speed and utterance chunking (breaking up single utterances into several shorter components and sending them successively (ibid.: 17)) are effective in signalling superior positions. It is worth noting that time-related cues like the time stamps are generally useful when members try to exert influence when verbal cues are not available.

As well as time stamps, another paralinguistic cue that significantly contributed to leadership in my data is the use of emoji. Reiterating my claim in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3), the classification of the OK hand sign symbol  is an example of emoji is a double-edged sword. At one end, the emoji represented conformity and acknowledgement of receipt, while at the other end the emoji may have signalled resentment. The particular situation regarding this emoji can be seen in Example 5.3, where Wani used the symbol repetitively after the final decision was announced. The discussion came to a halt after her contribution and gave the impression that the decision announced previously was the final one. In this complex process of DM, I am unable to provide a clear-cut answer as to the meaning behind the emoji used by Wani. My assertion agrees with Dresner and Herring's (2010) findings. Using examples of a smiley emoticon, the authors claim that a user may not be physically smiling when s/he produces or types the smiley emoticon. Such an emoticon can partially express positive feelings of the sender, function as a mitigation tool to soften critical messages or express satirical remark to the recipient. Dresner and Herring make a valid point and show that there is no one-size-fits-all guide for understanding the meanings behind emoji.

On closer inspection, emoji are interpreted as semantically different and they are open to various interpretations (Kelly, 2015; Danesi, 2017). Kelly (2015: 24) claims that the increased use of virtual communication has changed 'the degree of

acceptance of what constitutes a conversation'. As a result of this, emoji are interpreted differently by everyone. Aligned with this are Miller et al. (2016: 267), who conducted research on emoji across five different mobile platforms, and found that 'people's interpretations for a given emoji character vary across multiple platforms than for a single platform renderings'. Miller et al.'s (2016) study is important as it demonstrates that gauging the implied meaning behind an emoji is challenging and the consequence of misunderstanding the non-verbal cues is misinterpretation behind its meanings. Unlike real-life interactions, online communication is very limited in terms of contextual cues that would provide more information about the meaning and functions that they may add to leadership.

Despite the (deceptive) claim by Darics (2017: 17) that non-verbal cues are the 'textual representation of emotions, feelings, or mental state', I agree that these resources 'help communicators inscribe affect into written conversation' and 'help leaders enhance solidarity and create a sense of belonging' in online interactions. Referring to Example 5.3 mentioned above, it may be accurate to claim that the use of emoji helped Wani to convey a critical message in response to Sarah's decision and ratification, while at the same time showing support for the decision maker. In respect of leadership, the thumbs up emoji used by Wani either challenged or supported Sarah's leadership. Online non-verbal cues are ambiguous and can be double-edged, and have the potential to be manipulated by members to strategically convey various functions in leadership activities. The use of emoji in this research seems to demonstrate that these resources would be extremely promising for future research to understand leadership operationalisation in online communication.

This issue of ambiguity is more far-reaching and is outside the scope of my study. It deserves empirical research for further theorisation on the use of emoji in respect to leadership. Align with Dresner and Herring (2010: 263) who investigated the use of emoticons, I agree that researchers need to 'go beyond simple description and classification of emoticon types and that does not presume them always to express emotion' (Dresner and Herring, 2010: 263). Detailed and elaborated suggestions for future research on emoticons are presented in Dresner and Herring (2010) and Kelly (2015).

Adding to the factors that I have previously discussed, I also acknowledge other contributing factors that influenced the minimal enactment of leadership in the WA app, namely hierarchical differences, expert status, the degree of task complexity, task urgency, and close relationships within the TEFL team (see Figure 7.1). The degree of participation in the WA group is also dependent on the discursive norms of the TEFL team. In this case, lurking is seen as acceptable in the TEFL team and it seems to be one of their locally-defined practices that shapes and reinforces the discursive and behavioural workplace norms in this CofP. This behaviour in turn constitutes an element that shapes the behaviour in a larger context of the workplace.

In addressing the second RQ, we can thus conclude that the similarities and discrepancies between the two contexts of DM in this team have contributed to different dynamics in leadership. Instances of leadership work by the ordinary members in the WA group are fewer than what was found in the meetings, and in most cases, leadership in a digital realm requires additional effort by the formal leaders in order to gain and stimulate responses and engage the ordinary members in the discussions and also, leadership activities.

7.4 DM typologies and leadership

This section discusses the DM processes that were derived from the findings of the study. As shown in Chapter 4, the DM processes were categorised into several types based on their characteristics. These characteristics include the length of turns or the time taken between WA posts and their replies, the DM structure, decision ratification and the number of decisions involved in each DM episode. The processes, namely straightforward, fairly straightforward, complex, and highly complex, were placed along a continuum to best observe the degree to which they were distinct. The processes overlap with one another to some extent and in the data, they were not always noticeably different. These processes formed an integral part of the discursive norms and reflective aspects of how this working team arrived at decisions. The DM typology is important because it segregates the types of DM

processes that occur within the team. These processes then shape the local discursive norms of interaction that reinforce the DL practices of the team.

The straightforward processes, which are deemed to be the simplest DM form (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003), were generally dominated by the formal leaders, and involved less negotiations and involvement from the ordinary members. In meetings, turns were short and in neat sequences, while in WA, the issues received responses instantly through quick replies. The processes often produced a single decision, also known as 'decisions by authority' (Marra, 2003: 153), with explicit ratification by most chairs and managers and often did not require unanimous agreement (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003; Marra, 2003). Consistent with this claim, Zana and Sarah, the HOD and the designated leader, respectively, made most routine decisions within the straightforward process framework, both in meetings and the WA group. Such leaders typically have the final say on decisions (Marra, 2003; Holmes and Marra, 2008; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2017) and therefore it is the privilege of those with higher status to have the authority to make straightforward decisions. On another level, when the team achieved straightforward decisions using the WA group, such findings reinforced the claim that the WA app is a useful tool in providing efficient responses to solve problems quickly.

In Chapter 4 (Examples 4.1 and 4.2), I demonstrated the straightforward processes in which the decisions were ratified by Sarah. The topic of the discussion is a key factor that influences the domination of hierarchical leaders. In straightforward episodes, issues are often peripheral, routine, and uncontentious (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003) and, at times, the topics under the discussions made clear that the leaders are responsible for the decisions (*ibid.*). In this vein, straightforward DM processes typify the enactment of top-down leadership; negotiations and involvement from ordinary members are constrained and decisions are mostly achieved unilaterally (*ibid.*).

In longer discussions, ordinary members have more opportunity to participate, negotiate, challenge and reinforce proposals, facilitate and lead discussions, and even share leadership roles with the officially designated leaders (Chapter 6). The

respective processes include fairly straightforward, complex and highly complex DM processes that occur within discrete or distributed discussions, linear or cyclical DM structures, and produce single or multiple decisions. Although the processes provided opportunity for others to contribute freely, the decisions were not necessarily achieved harmoniously. Decisions, however, can still be achieved when consensus is received from most of the participants. Decisions that were achieved unanimously are similar to Marra's (2003) concepts of the 'decision by the majority' and 'decision by consensus' in her categories of DM styles. Marra, who analysed the negotiation strategies of the powerful and powerless, claims that 'decisions by majority' could fall somewhere between collaborative and authoritative moves, while 'decisions by consensus' may be the best option for members in a powerless position to influence DM when a decision is achieved with consent from all members.

The highly complex DM processes revealed more interesting insights into how decisions were achieved and how leadership is enacted. The decisions in this category underwent reversion and decision modification, either within each individual context, or across the two. For instance, in Example 5.4 (Chapter 5), the discussion was predominantly collaborative with active participation from different members, but it was Zana who made an authoritative move. She did this by modifying the decision that the team had collaboratively achieved through a 'jointly constructed thinking process' (Baxter, 2014: 437). Despite the long discussion, and the circular argument that it took to reach the decision, the modification by Zana both overpowered their collaborative effort and reinforced Zana's leadership role as the one who has the final say. This likewise reflects the development of leadership. Leadership was co-constructed and distributed in the first part of the discussion, but during the decision modification processes, leadership was performed unilaterally. The multiple processes in which decisions can be achieved show that leadership can be either authoritative, distributed, or both. Although modifications occurred infrequently in my data, these instances show that modification is an accepted activity in DM and forms part of the norms within this CofP. My findings support the claim by Yeung (2004: 143) that collaborative DM may not be 'purely egalitarian participation' because the hierarchical relationship between superiors and

subordinates still exists. The DM typology is a theoretical construct that has captured practices of leadership and reflected the dynamics of the distribution of leadership roles among members.

Decision modification is regularly observed in DM research; in fact, researchers have widely acknowledged that decisions are 'short-lived and burdened with uncertainty, rely on interrelated factors and 'the consequences of change are not always easily assessed' (Halverson and Sarangi, 2001: 11). Despite this, very little research has analysed the processes through which decisions are modified after they have been supposedly finalised. My findings contribute to this gap.

Nevertheless, the social relationships within which leadership takes place reveal a more complex dynamic between DM and leadership. I propose several social conditions that affect various leadership strategies, which include the loose boundaries between legitimate authority and the team's hierarchical differences. As indicated in Chapter 3, the hierarchical structure of the TEFL team suggests that it practices a top-down approach to leadership. There is no doubt that the formal leaders were more privileged in DM and this was reflected in decisions derived from the straightforward processes and the speech acts of expressing approval and having the final say. However, their status, seniority and expertise were contested and challenged at various points during the interactions. This may be due to the close relationships that the official leaders and the ordinary members had developed with one another after working together for several years on different projects prior to joining the TEFL team. During the interview sessions, all members expressed the view that their relationships were collegial and close.

Additionally, the designated leader's leadership styles and the egalitarian working environment contributed considerably to the variety of DM processes and DL practices. Sarah's democratic and solidarity-led leadership style encouraged the participation of others, allowing them to share leadership roles with her. Example 6.4 (Chapter 6) shows an illustration of leadership roles which were shared by Sarah and Irene. This is due not only to Sarah's democratic leadership style, but also to the local norms that form a supportive environment for the participants to be actively

involved in DM and take on leadership roles. Wilson (2011: 166) found that the followers took on leadership by 'following a trajectory from potential leaders (everybody) through emergent leaders to core leaders, or anywhere in between'. Arguing that a supportive environment nurtures leadership development, Wilson also states that subordinates can display their leadership abilities to the existing leaders and modify 'what they do when they have the opportunity and as their specific role requires it' (ibid.: 67). The egalitarian working atmosphere of the TEFL team and Sarah's laissez-faire leadership style allowed the ordinary participants to be comfortable taking on leadership roles by drawing on a variety of strategies that are relatively different from the leadership behaviours of the designated leaders.

The remaining key elements impacting on the various DM processes and leadership practices are expert knowledge, epistemic primacy and deontic authority. Those with expert knowledge, also known as 'expert power' holders (French and Raven, 1959: 263), participating in DM discussions was something to be expected although 'it was not routine' (Marra, 2003: 137). As Choi and Schnurr (2014) observe, the status of participants in the wider institutional context is insignificant compared to their expertise and, more often than not, experts ratify the decisions within areas of their discipline. Indeed, those with special knowledge in specific areas, regardless of their positions, take on leadership roles by displaying their expert knowledge. For a more authoritative approach, the participants did not only exhibit expert knowledge, they also claimed epistemic primacy by judging and assessing the practicality and consequences of the suggestions proposed. Deontic authority, on the other hand, was claimed by those who may have expert knowledge, i.e. both the formal leaders and the ordinary members, who determined how issues discussed should be treated and what ought to be done by the team.

A possible reason for these strategies is because the leaders do not necessarily have sufficient and expert knowledge in all tasks; hence the expert role is constantly negotiated. In most cases, the senior members like Syahira and Zana, were often consulted by Sarah before the team arrived at a decision. This choice by Sarah shows the importance of these participants within DM. During the interviews, Sarah claimed that she would always seek Syahira's opinion and referred to Zana particularly to

authorise the proposals that were deemed appropriate as decisions. The legitimacy that Sarah gave to them indicates Syahira and Zana's special status within the team, and in fact, to some extent, overrides Sarah's position as the formally appointed leader.

Finally, the contextual factors that shape the DM processes are: the purpose of the task, degree of task complexity, the urgency of the task, and the context in which the discussions took place. The meetings from my dataset revealed various issues that were widely discussed and demonstrated considerable instances of leadership taking place. Issues that were covered in the meetings ranged from simple to complex, and from prospective to emergent and critical issues. With regard to WA, the participants claimed that it was used to relay information, initiate further discussion after the meetings, and seek opinions and confirmation. The WA dataset has shown that many decisions that took place were those that required confirmation from the leaders. Thus, this limited the involvement of ordinary members and led to more authoritative moves in leadership. Occasionally, discussions became time-sensitive when the issues discussed required immediate responses and solutions. The participants shape and define DM while at the same time, the DM processes and contexts influence the way members behave in leadership.

It is worth noting that the way decisions are reached and the social factors around them should not be considered mutually exclusive. Rather, they are complementary. The data analysis shows that the decisions that emerged from the group's DM processes shaped and were shaped by the joint influences of the social contextual factors and the DL practices within the team. The participants drew on a shared repertoire of linguistic strategies and behavioural norms that were expected and accepted within their workplace contexts. Thus, as characterised by the interactions and negotiations in the DM processes, we can conclude that the leadership constellation within the team does not lean strictly towards typical, traditional leadership, but often the practice of leadership was distributed and collaborative to some extent. The findings support Choi and Schnurr's (2014: 498) assertion that leadership is better illustrated along a continuum, with the traditional hierarchical

top-down leadership at one end and ‘maximally collaborative and participative’ leadership at the other.

In the section that follows, I discuss these findings in respect to wider implications for conceptualisations of leadership.

7.5 RQ 3: Critical perspectives of leadership conceptualisation

This section aims to answer the third RQ that sought to explore a more critical perspective of leadership. This will be achieved by engaging with the criticisms and addressing the debates of leadership that are drawn from business, organisational and management studies. This section will also examine the current trends in discursive approaches to leadership studies, and the implications of the current discussion within a conceptualisation of leadership in larger theoretical debates.

This section returns to the issues that were raised in Chapter 1 and 2. My arguments are structured around two issues:

1. How can sociolinguists and pragmatists guard themselves from producing findings that attribute leadership to anything and everything?
2. How can we re-think the relationship of a leader-follower dyad?

The questions are addressed accordingly in the next section.

7.4.1 Leadership is (not) anything and everything

The post-heroic studies that advocate leadership as a collective work done by members, although having avoided ‘extreme hero-worshipping’, have been exposed by several critics (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2016: 143). As I have suggested in Chapter 2, post-heroic studies are criticised for risking generalising the work of leadership to any activities within interaction. Such activities include, for instance, referring to teamwork or mutual adjustment as leadership, and there is minimal evidence of ‘heroization and any form of influencing act’ (ibid.: 143). Leadership is widely dispersed to refer to all aspects of organisation, and those who manage to claim leadership ‘get a sprinkle of the glamor of being portrayed as being a leader or

involved in leadership (and not just an employee or a peer)' (ibid.). If all speech acts were to be labelled as leadership, discourse analysts risk conceptualising leadership as all-encompassing (ibid.) and seeing leadership everywhere.

Recognising the risk of overgeneralising the discursive complexities of workplace discourse, many (sociolinguistic) researchers guard against an overly-simplified view of leadership (Holmes, Vine and Marra, 2011; Clifton, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). When addressing this criticism, researchers in the discourse analysis field should consider how successful the attempts for leadership made by the participants of an interaction are. In bridging the gap, Schnurr (fc) notes that attempts for leadership need to be legitimised by others for the acts to be considered as leadership, and the legitimisation could be done both by those in positions of authority or by the ordinary group members.

Legitimation empowers those (especially in lower positions) who attempt to do leadership, and informs the analyst of the norms of acceptable behaviour that characterise an act of leadership. By underscoring the importance of legitimisation, we can avoid categorising every behaviour as leadership or generalising that leadership can be enacted by anyone. Instead, we are productively arguing that leadership is an ongoing act that is constantly negotiated, challenged and co-constructed in complex dynamics of actual interaction, and those whose leadership attempts are endorsed or supported by the formal leaders or other members are considered to be enacting successful leadership. We need to identify not only the 'person(s) who has the most influence in the process of managing meaning' (Clifton, 2017: 63) but also we need to consider how those in positions of authority legitimise others members in their leadership attempts. Through this endeavour, we respond to the criticisms of 'so-called post-heroic leadership' by providing a strong focus on empirical evidence to capture leadership and legitimisation *in situ*, hence challenging the claim that 'everybody can do leadership – and nobody is supposed to do followership' (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2016: 143).

7.4.2 Leader-follower dyad

The second criticism of leadership research that is currently debated is the tensions around the terminologies of 'leader' and 'follower' (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014; Learmonth and Morrell, 2016; Collinson, 2017). This relationship is argued to have a tendency to include and exclude some people 'in a way that produces differentiation and marginalization' (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014: 16). By posing the relationship to certain groups of people in a working team, we 'clearly favour[s] some people, who are upgraded in terms of status, influence and rewards' with those who have 'demotion to 'followership' status' (ibid.). Learmonth and Morrell (2016) whose article has challenged Collinson and Tourish (2015) on their conceptualisation of leader-follower dyad, state that these authors' formulation of 'follower dissent and resistance' (Learmonth and Morrell, 2016: 267) is problematic. Learmonth and Morrell continue to speculate that the term 'follower' denotes that one should share similar goals with the leader, and those who resist and dissent are, technically, not followers. In challenging Learmonth and Morrell's arguments, Collinson (2017: 279) claims that the definition of followers put forth by Learmonth and Morrell is 'one-dimensional, uncritical and self-fulfilling' and 'very literal'.

Learmonth and Morrell's views on this issue seem to suggest that the concept of leadership is static and unable to be challenged, so it appears that they have overlooked the complex picture of leadership. By representing followers as unable to dissent and placing them in subordinate positions, Learmonth and Morrell reinforce the concept of different hierarchical groups and asymmetrical relationships. If we were to agree with Learmonth and Morrell, leadership would be seen as exercising downwards control, denying all other strategies put forwards by other members. Reiterating the findings of Chapter 6, my analysis has illustrated how those in so-called underprivileged positions, were actively involved in leadership. Leadership in this team, rather than concentrating on the leaders only, is observed to be dynamic where roles are distributed widely across the members. The ordinary members were found to be co-constructing, negotiating and even challenging the leadership roles played by the formal leaders. The ordinary members took leadership roles when and if they possessed knowledge or expertise on the issues raised and

stepped down to allow others to rise up to leadership. The various pieces of evidence of leadership illustrating distributive work and collaborative dynamic aligned with Collinson's (2017: 279) reflexive claim that 'there seems to be no logical or conceptual reason why, from a critical perspective, followers should be treated as incapable of resistance'. My study does not specifically focus on how followers showed dissent and resistance, but it has adequately shown how the ordinary members demonstrated their competence, through various discourse strategies, to perform leadership, challenging the leadership attempts by the formal leaders and collaborating actively with the team members to enact leadership. The DM contexts in which these activities occurred to have demonstrated the discursive, and fluidity of, leadership roles that were widely shifted and dispersed, hence contributing to the attempts to 'denaturalize' the great leader-follower divide (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014: 46).

My findings have obscured the distinctions in authority within the leader-follower dyad, instead suggesting that the relationships are highly problematic and in some cases, presumably irrelevant. Since the ordinary members are able to take on leadership roles and challenge their leaders, it thus raises the question of whether there is a need to reinforce distinctions between leaders and followers. Should the term 'follower' be abandoned, since the ordinary members were all generally able to take on leadership roles in leadership processes (even if only momentarily)?

I am aware of the danger of dismissing the concept of 'follower' in leadership and acknowledge that the essence of leadership is, indeed followership (Collinson, 2005: 171; Ladkin, 2010). This is also supported by other scholars such as Spillane and Sherer (2004), who state that followers constitute the leadership activity, and Ladkin (2010: 28), who asserts that 'leadership does not exist without people who are in some way identified as 'leaders' or people who are identified as people who they will lead'.

Now let us consider an example by Collinson (2017: 278), where he explains that 'academics may claim that they are not followers in universities, yet they/we are frequently required to 'follow' and implement initiatives in both HE generally and

their/our own universities specifically with which they/we disagree'. This statement makes it clear that leadership indeed needs followers in order for it to operate dynamically. In fact, the participants of my study who participated in the interviews claimed that the TEFL team acknowledged the authority of their formal leaders, Sarah and Zana. Irene stressed during the interview that although she was appointed to lead the TP tasks with Eusof, she never regarded herself as a leader but described herself as a 'free rider' in the team. Sarah, on the other hand, mentioned that the team had always sought approval from Zana before they advanced any proposals into decisions. Although the dataset suggests that this is not always the case, there were several instances where Sarah and Zana collaboratively made decisions with the team members (Chapter 5). When all participants (except for Zana and Wani) were asked about who they thought would lead the team best, they nominated a member that they believed could take on the main leadership roles. This particular question, and also the empirical evidence showing the ordinary members complying with their formal leaders, showed that even in a close-knit community such as the TEFL team, the belief in the leader and follower terminologies are deeply ingrained within the team. Hence, although it is tautological to conclude that the leader-follower dichotomies may be less relevant, particularly at times when the ordinary members were found to be doing leadership either harmoniously or not, it is probably more prudent for now to maintain the leader-follower dyad in describing the dynamic and complex processes of leadership *in situ*.

Rather than ending this debate and privileging leaders over followers, there is a clear need for more critical studies that could take these arguments further. Future studies could reveal more insights into this dichotomy in order to examine, for instance, discursive strategies used by followers to show resistance to their leaders, and the social constructs of 'doing followership'. The constructs of leadership by the followers could then be critically examined before considering whether the dyad of leader and follower is worth retaining in leadership research. Carsten et al. (2010: 543) have focused on 'how individuals socially construct their roles as followers and explore followership schemas and contextual influences that relate to these constructions'; their study could act as a starting point to engage in this debate.

The issues discussed above are just some of the recent issues addressed in the literature within the fields of organisational behaviour, business and management. As contended by most scholars in this field, it is proactive for sociolinguists, pragmatists, and/or discourse analysts to integrate, respond to, challenge and/or feed into ideas of leadership in order to continue speculating the concept, so as to continuously engage in the sharing of thoughts and aspects that have been overlooked within each study. The study by Schnurr and Schroeder (2018) encompasses this multi-disciplinary stance; where the authors address the state of leader-follower terminological issues discussed in business and organisational sciences and show how research in applied linguistics could make significant contributions to the debates. Such an endeavour is one of the ways that will contribute towards challenging the ongoing debates around post-heroic notions of leadership and refining the operationalisation of leadership.

7.6 Insights gained from adopting the CofP framework

This section discusses the concept of CofP and the analytical perspectives that it makes to understanding the leadership practices discussed in this study.

As outlined in Chapter 3 in more detail, 'the key in CofP framework is the word 'practice' (Drath and Palus, 1994). As argued by Drath and Palus (1994: 13), 'meaning and community are co-constructive; they make each other'. In other words, meaning constructs community, and community constructs meaning, and these two constructs are a reflection of culture (ibid.). In this view, Drath and Palus (1994: 13) posit that 'leadership as an offspring of culture is the meaning-making aspect of culture centred around practice - people doing things together'. In a CofP, members develop practices and learn established practices through mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire, as befits their membership status. In other words, 'a CofP inevitably involves the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence' (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 1999: 174). Over time, the discursive behaviours of members in a CofP result in the development of shared repertoire and acceptable interactional patterns (Schnurr, 2009). The use of a CofP framework for this study is appropriate as it

supports the view of leadership as a social process, situated in and occurring through social interaction and participation in a CofP.

In order to understand the ways in which leadership discourse is influenced and shaped by discursive practices that characterise this team, I have utilised a CofP framework in addition to an IS framework. The CofP framework has facilitated the analysis by highlighting the impact of the context within which the leadership discourse of the team took place. For instance, consider their degree of integration into CofP. As mentioned by Drath and Palus (1994: 12), 'proximity is measured only in terms of time spent or position occupied'. This is especially true when we refer to the analysis involving Eusof (Chapter 6), in which there are very few examples of Eusof enacting leadership. This is due to his status as the newest member of the team, and also within the larger department. Thus, Eusof may be relatively member of this CofP until he has fully learned the interactional patterns negotiated among the members of this CofP which are regularly used in their meetings and on the WA group. As shown in the analysis, newcomers like Eusof and core members like Irene, Sarah, Syahira, Wani and Zana participated differently in leadership processes. Wani, for instance, does leadership by reinforcing her proposals repetitively. Similarly, Zana explicitly expresses her authority over DM processes by changing the decision that was reached collectively among the members. Irene and Syahira, on the other hand, show their leadership by taking the lead on topics upon which they hold expertise. These discursive leadership strategies are perceived as acceptable and are utilised by core members of this CofP in order to construct meaning and influence for leadership. They also reflect aspects of the group's expectations of doing leadership, and the ways in which leadership emerges from mutual engagement.

Eusof's way of doing leadership, on the other hand, is found to be subtler. Take Example 6.5 (Chapter 6): Eusof was challenged by other members such as Sarah and Wani on his proposal about a specific dish to be served after a meeting. In comparison to Wani, who seemed quite stringent by directly stating her proposal, Eusof initiated the proposal by asking the other members for help in preparing the dish that he suggested. However, his suggestion was deemed inappropriate. Due to the fact that this comment was overruled by the senior members Syahira and Sarah,

we can deduce that they shape and reinforce what is perceived to be acceptable within the group's practices. This example demonstrates that proximity and familiarity with the CofP's ways of making decisions are some of the factors that influence one's construction of leadership. As indicated by Schnurr and Zayts (2017: 39), such examples show 'normal, unmarked (and politic) ways' in which members of this CofP interact and make decisions.

The use of the CofP framework has also enabled analysts to capture normative practices and the establishment of these practices over time. For instance, it is made clear throughout the study that epistemic primacy is one of the acceptable linguistic practices used by the members of the CofP in doing leadership. Epistemic primacy, which was found to be exerted by most of the members (Irene, Syahira, Wani, Zana and Sarah), forms part of the discursive repertoire that characterises leadership practices in this CofP. During data collection, I only observed one instance in which Eusof utilised this strategy when doing leadership.

So, by analysing several discursive practices in this CofP, this thesis was able to identify and discuss some specific leadership practices that may not necessarily be performed as such in other workplaces but which rather characterise this particular team. Take, for instance, the use of WA for the purposes of making decisions and getting prompt feedback from the team. Resulting from the team's close relationship and regular engagement in tasks at work, the use of the WA group has dynamically emerged as the most preferred platform to discuss emergent issues, unlimited by time or space and thus changing communication practices. The WA platform accounts for distinctive communicative practices that the members have developed, thereby shaping and creating the team's way of doing DL and DM. By looking at the team's practices on the WA group, it was possible to demonstrate localised communicative findings without making generalised claims based on typical workplace practices in another setting.

In conclusion, the CofP framework in combination with IS analysis has enabled me to identify normative practices that influenced and shaped the ways DL and DM are constructed within the team, and make educated guesses that have helped

strengthened my analysis on the behaviours of the participants both in DL and DM. These consequently indicate that leadership performance, decision-making and workplace practices are intricately intertwined and constantly reinforce each other.

7.7 Taking a distributed perspective on leadership

This study has discussed the DL practices by demonstrating how leadership roles are distributed across the team members in various DM processes. The contextual factors that influence and were influenced by the strategies utilised by the participants were discussed. Although participants with legitimate authority and in subordinate positions drew on epistemic and deontic primacy as strategies to perform leadership, these speech acts, however, were enacted differently in micro-level interactions through the use of different discourse resources. The discourses utilised in virtual communication, such as emoji and time stamps, were succinctly discussed. The WA app featured limited leadership moments by ordinary members, but those instances of leadership by the ordinary members show that leadership was also, indeed distributed in a text-based context. The findings suggest that the contexts of the discussions, both face-to-face and in the WA group, could either facilitate or hinder the participation of the ordinary members, thereby affecting the dynamics of DL. In this chapter too, I have addressed issues surrounding current post-heroic theorisation by providing some suggestions as to how discourse analytical research could provide more empirical evidence to engage with the criticisms and challenges posed by mainstream leadership research. Finally, I acknowledged the terminological issues with leader-follower relationships and expressed my stance from an applied linguistics perspective. This study contributes to the increasing research into DL, by shifting the focus to the leadership practices of both those in authority and those in subordinate positions, to understand how both groups enact leadership (Vine et al., 2008; Clifton, 2012, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). The empirical evidence and the discussion provided throughout this thesis have generated a wider conceptualisation of leadership.

Focusing on these aspects, we have witnessed a distributed practice of leadership that is 'stretched over people and place' (Spillane and Sherer, 2004: 2). Spillane and

Sherer describe three ways in which leadership can be distributed among members of a team, either through collaborative, coordinative or collective effort. In my study, the leadership tasks were distributed when the participants collaborated in meetings, coordinated interdependent tasks assigned to them and used their own initiative for leadership in the WA group. In DL, the leadership roles are constantly shifting on a turn-by-turn basis and different members take on leadership roles. The members could even lead independently without the team leaders. The leaders at times were no longer considered to be the most knowledgeable or the most capable team member, hence other members who were more experienced influenced the DM process. Similar observations occurred within an interdisciplinary research group in a university setting (Choi and Schnurr, 2014). The team, which is leaderless, comprises the members of different departments with varying positions, such as junior postdoctoral research fellow, co-investigators and principal investigator. Nonetheless, when it comes to negotiating and solving disagreement, 'the status of participants within the project and in the wider institutional context is not as relevant as their respective expertise' (ibid.: 12). Situations such as this reinforce the claim that expert roles could supersede the authority of one's positions in doing leadership. The ordinary members of the TEFL team also assumed expert roles and they did indeed take on leadership roles by exhibiting their knowledge and experience, thereby challenging the authority of the designated leaders, and illustrating a distributed picture of leadership within this team.

The findings of this study, along with views of Spillane and Sherer (2004), support the assertion by Choi and Schnurr (2014: 33) that 'the image of a single (and easily identifiable) leader has to be replaced by the more inclusive picture of a mosaic in leadership activities in which everyone participates'.

With the distinctions between the construction of leadership in an offline and online context, this thesis has illustrated that leadership practices in this hierarchical (but non-traditional) CofP are distributed, albeit the roles are not always harmoniously shared and leadership is not equally enacted across the contexts. Similarly to various DM processes, these aspects of DL exhibited by the team members are well suited to

the team's workplace norms. The following chapter will explicate the contributions that this study makes as well as address some of its limitations.

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will elucidate the theoretical, analytical and methodological contributions of my study, followed by a discussion of its limitations and future research avenues. I will then discuss the practical implications of my findings followed by some concluding remarks.

8.2 Theoretical and methodological contributions

Adopting a social constructionist approach to the ways in which leadership was enacted through discourse, the analysis and discussion in the previous chapters have demonstrated that leadership activities are undertaken and distributed in the ways that participants made decisions. This current research reinforces and extends existing research findings on workplace discourse and introduces the characteristics of DM processes in meetings and in a WA group. In the following sections, I illustrate the theoretical and methodological contributions made by this research.

8.2.1 Leadership discourse

The theoretical contribution of this thesis challenges the prevailing orthodoxy in the literature that attributes the final say in DM as the prerogative and leadership work of the hierarchical leader (Marra, 2009; Angouri and Angelidou, 2012; Clifton, 2012). Rather, this study has illuminated that ordinary members are capable of having the final say in a DM episode. I subsequently extend this argument by demonstrating that ordinary members who actively contributed during a DM episode could also be seen as playing crucial roles in undertaking successful leadership, even though the designated leader is the one who confirms the final decisions.

Rather than attributing successful leadership merely to the individual who ratifies the decision, leadership researchers more generally should acknowledge the leadership roles of ordinary members who have had a significant influence on the

actual process of DM and on reaching the decision. Current leadership studies in applied linguistics still advocate the concept that the announcer of the decision is the one who can claim successful leadership. I propose that in circumstances where the designated leader does not play a major participative role during the DM processes, the act of ratifying and announcing a decision does not constitute the only act of leadership in this type of encounter. Instead, successful leadership roles should be attributed to all members who play crucial roles in leadership and not only to those who confirm the decision.

In addition to reinforcing the importance of acknowledging subordinates' contributions and roles in current leadership theorisations, I align with Schnurr (fc) on the significance of legitimation and support given by other participants towards any leadership claims. Keeping in mind the criticism that leadership discourse is broad and all-encompassing, ordinary members who attempt leadership and successfully gain influence over the decisions, and who are legitimised by the formal leader or other members for their leadership attempts, should be recognised as enacting successful leadership. In this way, researchers can avoid the danger of viewing leadership as anything and everything. My attempt to challenge and expand the current view of leadership is also an endeavour to engage with the criticisms posed by mainstream leadership scholars, namely that leadership studies grounded in interpretivism and/or social constructionism are uncritical and oversimplify the concept of leadership. Hence, in assessing the theoretical contributions that this study makes, I believe that the arguments raised regarding the importance of the final say in DM as part of the formal leader's responsibilities, and the importance of legitimation in undertaking successful leadership claims make valuable contributions to the conceptualisation of leadership in leadership discourse and the general field of DM studies.

8.2.2 Critical leadership studies

Observations gained from this study continue the attempts to challenge the static leader-follower dyad and persuasively indicate that the leadership roles are fluid and

are taken by different members at different phases of discussion (see also Schnurr and Shroeder, 2018).

Even with an increasing interest in studying leadership from the discourse perspective, mainstream leadership research has had a limited engagement with leadership discourse. However, noteworthy exceptions to this are Larsson and Lundholm (2010; 2013) who utilise a conversation analytic approach, and other critical leadership scholars such as Tourish et al. (2008), Alvesson and Spicer (2014) and Day (2014) who seek to 'denaturalise leadership' (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014: 9) and emphasise the significance of examining the ongoing process of social construction and negotiation in leadership processes. It is important for these leadership researchers to suspend any preconceived notions on the roles of leaders and those in subordinate positions, and take note from applied linguists and pragmatists who advocate the benefits of linguistic and discourse analytical tools. Instead of merely relying on quantitative and qualitative data such as interviews (Day, 2014) to continue contesting heroic notions of leadership, researchers should consider providing empirical grounding for leadership theories by exposing practices from day-to-day interactions, thus continuing to build and feed into current theoretical debates of leadership (Clifton, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017).

8.2.3 Decision-making

This thesis addressed the call by Huisman (2001: 76) for the investigation of DM to be placed 'in the context of a continuous stream of decision-making that develops in organisations in a variety of settings'. By sampling data and studying behaviour across different contexts of communication, I have verified the popular claim that decisions are ephemeral (*ibid.*), 'continuously faced with changes and adjustments of tasks and plans' (Halvorsen and Sarangi, 2015: 11) and that 'the future is inherently uncertain and that decision-making is a fundamentally contingent activity' (*ibid.*). The investigation of DM processes in meetings and WA has enabled me to identify the moment that decisions are made and the incremental processes of DM. Most importantly, I was able to examine the process of decision modifications across two contexts.

In my sample, some of the decisions that were agreed upon during face-to-face meetings were subsequently modified in the WA group. Thus, this investigation into two major and contrasting social contexts of communication has demonstrated the intertextuality between the WA messages and face-to-face meetings with regards to the DM processes. To the best of my knowledge, studies on DM that demonstrate the ephemeral quality of decisions are scarce, with most studies focusing on decision episodes within a single context (Halvorsen and Sarangi, 2015; Clifton, 2017) and the limited characterisation of the different DM processes (Marra, 2003; Sollitt-Morris, 1996). My research has particularly contributed to this research gap.

8.2.3 E-leadership

In reference to e-leadership, this study has addressed the functions of the WA platform in DM processes and the leadership practices that occurred within this context. Aligned with Darics (2017) on e-leadership, this study contributed to the research gap of how leadership is enacted in an under-researched but increasingly relevant platform for workplace discussion – in this case, the WA platform. By utilising micro-level analysis in examining real interactions in WA, this thesis exposed how several semiotic resources such as emojis and time stamps provided significant meanings within DM processes, taking into account the contextual cues and multiple interpretations of these resources. The study has succinctly demonstrated that such non-verbal cues are equally important in understanding DM activities, leadership performance and the communicative practices of working teams in the digital realm. The analysis took steps towards making visible the seen but unnoticed communication situations (Darics, 2016: 87) and non-verbal cues that play crucial functions in digital writing strategies, hence contributing considerably to the literature on digital discourse analysis and virtual team leadership practices.

8.3 Limitations of study

Although this study depicts the continuous processes of DM in two different contexts, there are also a number of limitations to the study. In the following section, I address some of these.

8.3.1 Dataset

The first limitation is the variety of the data collected in the study. This study looks at DM and leadership; and comprises the dataset of four meetings and a collection of WA messages within the duration of four months. It was made clear during the interviews that the TEFL team did not only make decisions in the meetings and the WA platform but would call their members to obtain responses over urgent matters. During the interview, Syahira claimed that the members would call her when her responses were needed to decide over critical and urgent issues. On the other hand, Sarah announced in one of the recorded meetings that she and Irene decided to have a meeting during an unplanned meetups, away from the team's working location. Similarly, Sarah made a decision with Eusof through a private conversation over the WA platform on issues of students' placement for TP. These decisions were made outside the settings of meetings and WA group messages, hence the detailed moments of DM were not visible to me. As a consequence, I was unable to represent the nuanced picture of the DM processes that occurred outside the settings of face-to-face meetings and WA messages that were also prevalently utilised by the participants to make decisions. However, the participants reported that face-to-face meetings and WA messages as higher utilised contexts for them to make decisions, hence the dataset collected pushed me to be ever more focused in elaborating the most relevant contexts for DM for this team.

8.3.2 Observation

Participant observation 'allows the researchers to compare and contrast between what people say and what people do in a given context and across contexts in order to arrive at a fuller representation of what is going on' (Dornyei, 2007: 133). This is particularly true as indicated in a study by Yeoh (2014), who identifies inconsistency between what people say they do and what they actually do with respect to their communicative practices in workplace emails. Yeoh's examination of emails signifies the importance of having first-hand experience of the natural data when exploring the actual social practice in any organisation. As stated in Chapter 3, I was a non-participant observer in the setting and my presence was to ensure that the

equipment functioned efficiently, and gained a clearer and familiar view of what really happened-during the meetings. The notes taken was for my personal reference and were not intended as fieldnotes for the analysis of linguistic data. Certainly, participant observation and relevant note-taking provide useful supplementary data sources about non-verbal actions, and participants' movements. However, the interview data that I have collected are sufficient for cross-checking and to validate the analysis from meetings and WA messages.

8.4 Methodological implications

Data from various sources were utilised and analysed using IS and the CofP framework. Whilst these are regularly used approaches and, thus, not entirely novel methodological approaches in leadership discourse scholarship, this study exemplifies the theoretical utility of the CofP framework in explicating locally defined practices in digitally mediated channels, such as WA. The CofP enabled the theoretical discernment of discursive, shared and acceptable norms of the team, based on the mutuality of engagement. These norms influenced the ways in which DM was enacted in the WA group and disclosed the contextual factors pertaining to the construction and negotiation of leadership roles. Evidence of these mutual practices has elucidated the social relationships of members, which simultaneously shaped and were shaped by the leadership practices within this setting. As attested by Angouri (2016: 334), the 'discursive construction of online communities allows space for members' perception to feed into the development of theoretical frameworks...into online groups and the practices of their members'.

This study provides a methodological innovation in studying leadership practices and DM in the digital medium of the WA app, thereby directly addressing the call by foremost leadership researchers to venture into interactional settings beyond the well-researched context of business meetings (Schnurr, 2017). While recorded meetings were useful for gaining insights into DM and observed leadership practices during face-to-face interactions, WA was a valuable data source for understanding the entirety and complexity of group interactions and DM. Of particular interest were the discrepancies between how leadership was constructed at the micro-level of

face-to-face meetings and online group interactions. Viewing both sets of data as intertextuality of workplace communication resulted in far richer detail and revealed a deeper and more complex picture of DM and leadership.

Instead of over-reliance on a single dataset, observations from diverse sources can feed into the main analytical processes of how leadership is enacted. Thus, a key methodological recommendation for empirical investigations into leadership and DM is the awareness and interrogation of salient digital media contexts of workplace communication that provide relevant data, amenable to analysis by the researcher. Privileging one medium, such as face-to-face communication, over a digital medium may result in a myopic and unrepresentative understanding of leadership practices. The workplace data from the present study holds the promise of contributing to insights on mainstream leadership studies with data collected by other researchers.

8.5 Future avenues for research

This thesis is essentially a case study of a workplace in a HE context in Malaysia, and due to its small-scale focus, the findings offer localised understandings of DM and leadership. Despite the limitations that this study has, the rich level of analysis can be verified, warranted, challenged and/or disproved (i.e. the DM continuum and characteristics of DM in meetings and the WA group (Chapter 5) and the variety of leadership strategies (Chapter 5-6) by future researchers in order to determine the extent to which the current conceptualisation of leadership is relevant to other workplace settings. Furthermore, interesting new questions, beyond the original scope of the study, have emerged from the analysis. Several issues regarding DM were brought up in Chapter 2, and the following noteworthy points warrant future research by DM and leadership researchers.

8.5.1 Decision-Making

In the following section, I revisit the questions that emerged on DM in the course of this research that could be further explored and examined by other researchers.

1. When a decision made at a pre-meeting is carried over into an official meeting, should the pre-meeting be included in the data and analysis as part of the DM process? Should the DM process in the official meeting be reconsidered as decision implementation instead?
2. Meetings and the WA group are just two of the settings in which DM can occur. Other contexts in which decisions can be made include emails, phone calls and one-to-one interactions, settings to which the researcher did not have access. This raises questions worth addressing: Where does a DM episode begin and end? How can we, as analysts, capture the previously invisible processes to contribute to the debates on the complexities of DM?
3. With these complexities regarding the social contexts in which decisions occur, future research could address the terminological and conceptual issues of 'decisions'. It would be worth investigating the question of 'What is a decision?' when a decision can be made retrospectively, modified and, sometimes, left undecided.
4. Another topic suggestion for further studies on DM is the attribution of ownership over decisions. This issue, which was addressed in the analysis chapter (Chapter 6) proved that determining personal ownership over decisions made collaboratively in the team was far more complex than originally anticipated (see also Clifton, 2017). Addressing decision ownership may help to fill the research gap on the current theorisation of decisions and the views on leadership and agency, making it a promising area for future research to consider.

There are endless possibilities for future researchers to significantly contribute towards DM research. The issues raised above could facilitate future research to continue addressing and generating new insights into a broader concept of DM and how the dynamics and complexities of DM feed into the local and broader aspects of leadership and CofP.

8.5.2 E-leadership

Another step in making this research more relevant to leadership scholarship is to continue exploring e-leadership in online communication settings. In line with the ubiquitous use of digital communications in professional workplaces, it would be relevant for researchers to explore the implications that this genre of communication has on leadership. My study has shown that a WA group was used to share rich information and engage in productive interactions between (temporarily) geographically dispersed colleagues. Agreeing with Darics (2016, 2017) and Angouri (2016), I find online communication fascinating as it presents inherently complex situations for participants to achieve their workplace objectives. Participants do not share the same physical presence and are restricted to written messages that, at times, lead to communication errors. Nonetheless, with these limitations, my participants managed to hold several discussions and achieve a consensus on the issues raised. Observations such as these are insightful for exploring the dynamics of leadership and developing a critical understanding of leadership enactment in digital communication and its discrepancies with face-to-face settings. Apart from WA, other digital communication media where 'leadership is equally taking place' (Schnurr, *fc*) include social media, IM, and virtual teams. Although these sources of data are relatively accessible in comparison to real-life interactions, contextual clues are interpreted and represented in vastly different ways in the virtual world, making research in this context challenging yet exciting.

Digital communication is rich with various technical features, and it thus may be prudent to focus on a specific aspect such as the typography, ideograms or orthographic forms and their relationship with the texts, speed and reply behaviour as a starting point (Darics, 2016, 2017). As I discussed in Chapter 7, determining the participation of users within online interactions remains a challenge. However, some of WA's features, such as the blue ticks and the time stamps, have provided more transparency over users' participation. To take this issue further, interested scholars may want to explore how participation and answering behaviours impact on the group dynamics in leadership processes in an online group chat (Freudenthaler, Schneider and Vorderer, 2015).

8.5.3 Leadership

Another possibility for further investigation is to approach leadership from a post-heroic perspective by addressing the complex and often team-based practices enacted within workplace environments. There should be a parity of focus on the important distinction between 'leaders' and 'leadership'. Such an undertaking could be done in a more socially constructed ontology where the focus is moved away from specific individuals and positions and towards understanding the intricate processes of collective leadership, and viewing leadership as a shared, collaborative phenomenon (Crevani et al., 2010; Vine et al., 2012; Larsson and Lundholm, 2013; Clifton, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017). In this respect, it may be of interest to future researchers to shadow a committee that works on a project, a team working during a specific communicative event, or a group of people working over a specific period of time. By gathering data from different angles, numerous leadership behaviours can be captured at various stages and aspects of the project or event. At the same time, as this study has shown, the analytical tools in discourse research have the potential to reveal not only the co-construction of leadership but also the challenges and de-legitimation by members in different positions. This would also follow the burgeoning research on post-heroic leadership and the endeavour towards the long-awaited need for 'rethinking leadership' (Ladkin, 2010).

There is also great potential for analysing the data of the current study from a different perspective. One area worth looking at is the cultural aspects of DM processes and leadership styles utilised by Malaysian participants. Another possibility would be executing a cross-cultural comparison between the current data and the data used in leadership discourse research that is more generally collected from Western contexts. On many occasions, the context plays a prominent role where it 'might take the lead in creating leadership' (Ladkin, 2010: 179) and enables leadership to emerge throughout various stages of interactions. Looking into these aspects of leadership would contribute to the scarce literature covering Asian workplace settings and add to the existing Western-focused leadership studies. A good model study for future research with similar aims to consider is Baxter and Al A'ali's (2014) investigation of female leaders in the Middle East and the West.

With regard to my remarks on the leader-follower terminologies in Chapter 7, there is a clear need to provide empirical evidence of follower-centred leadership. Further research could investigate discursive strategies of followership and examine the so-called followers' perception of followership in response to the critiques of followership, addressing the current call to 're-think followership'. From a more critical perspective, researchers could explore how followers influence the formal leader and address the question, 'is followership really necessary in leadership?' As suggested by Vine et al. (2008: 355), future research could also examine leadership that is achieved in a more collective manner involving multiple leaders and multiple 'followers'. By focusing on followership, we can 'move away from a preoccupation with the dyadic relationship between leader and follower as the key unit of analysis in leadership research' (ibid.) and provide those in subordinate positions with the same agency as formal leaders in their capabilities of doing leadership. To achieve this, leadership discourse scholars should engage closely with other leadership literature to explore, build, critique and exploit relationships, rather than accepting them as distinct entities. The impact of such an undertaking to diversify leadership practices as we know it could include revising (or perhaps solving) the terminological and conceptual issues of leader-follower relationships.

Finally, in line with the recommendations from workplace discourse scholars (Mullany, 2007; Handford, 2010; Clifton, 2017; Darics, 2017; Schnurr and Zayts, 2017), applied linguists should continue to critically engage with ongoing issues of leadership and highlight discursive techniques by which leadership is achieved to benefit practitioners. One of the benefits of this study's research findings could be to connect discourse strategies of leadership to life, being particularly valuable to practitioners and also more generally to a wider audience, in order to enhance, change, or merely encourage continuous reflection of workplace practices. With evidence-based examples, practitioners will be able to recognise the significance of the language centred-approach and 'envisage things differently to challenge [the] existing ways of being' (Clifton, 2008: 241). Contemporary research should work innovatively to develop practical applications for the workplace. The practicalities of evidence-based training materials have been exemplified, for example, by the

projects of sociolinguists from The LWP project, chaired by Janet Holmes, Linguistic Profiling for Professionals (LiPP), headed by Louise Mullany, and The Cambridge and Nottingham Business English Corpus (CANBEC), whose corpus is constructed by Michael Handford. Moreover, Stokoe (2014) introduced the unique CARM method (Conversation Analytic Role-play Method), which has been implemented in communication workshops for mediators. As a conversation analyst, Stokoe found that data collected in real-life situations provides 'next turn proof procedure [that was useful] to generate evidence about the effectiveness or otherwise of communicative practices' (ibid.: 256). Darics (2016), on the other hand, published a guide book on effective digital communication at work with the purpose of creating critical awareness of small detail of linguistic and semiotic resources, challenging prescriptive guides and assumptions about effective communication and facilitating the readers to become proficient digital communicators at work.

8.6 Implications for practice

Given how important good communication and soft skills are in the workplace, it is not surprising that sociolinguistic and pragmatic studies increasingly devote considerable resources to devise and offer effective communication strategies through empirical studies (Darics, 2017). The research done within these fields has given insights into leadership from the perspective of everyday practices of talk at work, that reflect leadership rather than depend on prescriptive and abstract theories of leadership.

A possible way to apply this research would be to present the findings of my research to the participants with the aim of enlightening them on the complexities of DM. This could be demonstrated firstly through a presentation of the key findings on DM and various DM processes, with support from recordings of the interviews. Taking a more participatory approach, I could take the participants through selected extracts, discussing the various processes of DM that were involved throughout the data before initiating several topics to be elaborated upon. Reiterating the findings on DM, several noteworthy topics include the long and complicated processes of DM, the length of time taken to achieve decisions, and the use of WA for DM. A point

worth reiterating to the participants is the occurrence of small talk, which is found to be relatively excessive. As mentioned by one of the participants (Irene), the team could have conducted shorter meetings if small talk were reduced. This would have a significant effect on DM processes too, since these would be shorter without the interruption of small talk. Observations on empirical evidence like this thus provide opportunities for the participants to critically reflect on their DM practices and the impact that these issues may have on their workplace productivity. Rather than prescribing and specifying how decisions ought to be made, the participants could benefit from engaging in two-way discussions with other team members, where topics of interest, such as suggestions for improving their DM practices, could be openly discussed. I am particularly interested in the claim by McCarthy (2001: 5) that the responsibility of applied linguists 'is to provide an interface between linguists and practitioners where appropriate, and to be able to talk on equal terms to both parties'. I might not be working with any practitioners in the very near future, but the practice of encouraging reflection and engaging in two-way discussions is important for both the researcher and audience, allowing all parties to exchange experiences and find ways to improve workplace communication and practices that fit within the organisation's goals.

The second potential way to use this research for the benefit of the participants is to enhance their understanding of DL and the complexities of leadership. Taking a more participatory approach, similar to the discussions of decisions and DM, a sharing session could be held with the focus on the findings on DL. This could raise awareness that the notion of leadership is not necessarily linked to hierarchy. In this discussion, the participants could walk through the transcripts where they would be able to see that leadership can be manifested in and through discourse, and that some leadership responsibilities are shared among members. This would highlight that leadership is and can be distributed across several members regardless of their formal positions. This understanding and awareness could be empowering to those in lower hierarchical positions, because they would learn that formal positions and authority are not exclusive components of leadership. The practices of DL give all members autonomy and accountability towards achieving the team's and

organisational goals. The transcripts and recordings of real-life meetings would give them a resource from which they might be able to examine and reflect upon their workplace practices. As claimed by Clifton (2012: 162), 'managers [and any other workers] do not need grand theories of leadership, rather they require a greater understanding of the discursive resources that are available to them that enable them to do leadership'. Following this claim, it is hoped that such discussion sessions could foster a greater understanding of how leadership is achieved through mundane and everyday interactions at work.

Following the argument that the team practiced DL, possible issues to be explored further could include:

1. whether a DL approach would enhance the productivity within the team or otherwise. Previous research has indicated that non-traditional leadership does not always drive organisations to success (Miles and Watkins, 2007; Kocolowski, 2010) due to a lack of shared direction and commitment. The participants could again reflect on their leadership practices and suggest how sharing leadership responsibilities could positively affect their DM processes.
2. the responsibilities that could be distributed in advance to members who have more experience in certain tasks. By determining the tasks that they are responsible for, the members are given autonomy to lead independently of the formal leaders and make decisions in their areas of responsibility. Subsequently, this strategy gives a team a different work dynamic. The distribution of tasks would not only save time in DM but also increase productivity when the team are engaged in DM. DM processes could potentially be shorter in duration, less likely to be side-tracked by discussing trivial topics, and these would benefit by optimising sustained attention.

Such sharing sessions would be an initial step towards engaging a wider audience, potentially through the medium of workshops. Owing to the fact that many leadership training courses still link hierarchy with leadership, the topic of DL from a social constructionist perspective could foster an understanding of DL. Using evidence from naturally-occurring data, the workshops could reveal remarkable

things from mundane workplace contexts and settings that have a significant impact on workplace practices.

Nonetheless, owing to the well-known challenges that researchers face in spoken discourse studies of incorporating knowledge into practice, walking through the transcripts with the participants would not be an easy task (Handford, n.a; Sarangi, n.a)¹⁷. Workshops or training courses that utilise mundane interactions, tape recordings and transcripts frequently receive scepticism for their limited scope in demonstrating scientific evidence of workplace issues. The 'outsiders' may find these transcripts and recordings uninteresting and trivial, and argue that they are unfit to identify problems and emerging issues. Mullany from LiPP¹⁸ confirmed that 'it is incredibly hard' to eliminate stereotypes on discourse and communication studies among the wider public. However, by providing real-life examples from workplace communication, researchers can instruct the participants on the benefits of approaching and improving workplace communication issues from the perspectives of pragmatics and linguistics. Mullany reiterated that many organisations have benefitted from real-life examples and brainstorming sessions in which these resources helped them to see the consistency of DM and leadership processes and how discourses contributed to these processes.

Additionally, it is important for researchers to share their exploration of the relationships between discourses and the contexts in which they occur. Considering relevant contextual and situational contexts would entail going beyond the texts under consideration. The participants would be informed that language is closely tied

¹⁷ These concerns were raised by Handford during a symposium on Applied Linguistics as Consultancy at the University of Nottingham (11th January 2018) where he delivered a talk on training international engineers in Japan. Similarly, Sarangi reiterated this point during a seminar series in Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick where he spoke of the challenges in reconciling interdisciplinary and transnationality in applied linguistics (28 September 2018).

¹⁸ At the Applied Linguistics as Consultancy at the University of Nottingham (11th January 2018), Mullany addressed the importance of battling the stereotypes that many people have on discourse and communication studies, and how consultancy could go about changing such stereotypes.

up with the social status and the practices of the community, which would help to deepen the participants' understanding of how meanings and interpretations are derived.

However, because organisational culture is related to broader sociocultural structures within society, changing organisational practices cannot be done overnight nor can it be addressed in isolation. Nonetheless, by bringing changes to workplace communication training courses through cutting-edge academic research, it is hoped that this approach will encourage participants to be critically aware of language and communication and to apply this linguistic knowledge to their organisational practices and goals. After all, what is important to the participants is not only the theoretical knowledge gained from workshops but also the practical implications that can impact their workplace teams.

As I have mentioned earlier, one of the potential DM sharing sessions could focus on how excessive small talk slows decision-making processes and the meetings as a whole. In strengthening the analysis, the exploration of texts could be supplemented with an analysis of context, background knowledge and previous literature to see how discourse studies could engage with professional preoccupations. It is hoped that such an endeavour could demonstrate that naturally-occurring data in workplaces are an ideal context for studying leadership in action.

Reflecting my interest in digital discourse, another potential sharing session could concentrate on the team's interactions on the WA platform. Findings from the WA interactions could be presented in order to enlighten the participants on the range of linguistic and semiotic resources available to them to enhance their communication skills in virtual contexts. For instance, the use of the WA platform, as accorded by the participants, is useful to get prompt feedback, make trivial decisions, and accelerate DM processes in time-urgent situations. Despite the generally positive usage of the WA platform, it is also worth reiterating how WA can negatively impact workplace practices and create an unhealthy work-life balance. Although none of the participants expressed discomfort when receiving WA messages outside the core working hours, one of the participants explained that the use of WA meant that the

team took things for granted. For instance, there were several occasions where the meetings were held ad hoc, and only announced through WA. Such acts were deemed intrusive and discourteous because participants were not informed in advance and decisions were not previously agreed by all members. The members might find themselves excluded and overloaded with demanding work tasks. The fact that the WA platform added another communication tool for the participants to constantly check and respond to could be overwhelming to some, further blurring the lines between personal and professional life. These claims could be demonstrated to the participants through transcripts that took place late in the night and over the weekend. The transcripts would enable the participants to reflect on several aspects such as the time the messages were sent, the nature of the issues and decisions that were commonly discussed and achieved on WA, the average duration of the discussions, and the participation received. These aspects would invite the participants to reflect on their DM practices and consider whether WA could have detrimental effects on work-related stress. It is hoped that the dissemination of these findings and a discussion on these concerns would invite critical reflection and awareness on the cumulative effect of increased working hours, mental well-being and healthy work-life balance.

I believe that the issues raised here reflect my effort to apply my research to the participants. Having the privilege of being an 'insider' within the workplace, and a colleague to participants, I believe potential sharing sessions would likely be insightful, highly relevant and beneficial to the organisation, inviting interesting feedback and open dialogues on the workplace practices and communication. As a novice researcher, I acknowledge that disseminating findings to improve communication at work is not an easy task. Hence, the suggested activities above are initial steps towards building workshops or training resources for practical, hands-on applications to a wider audience.

8.7 Closing remarks

Although leadership discourse has been recognised since Fairhurst's (2007) work on discursive leadership, this field has recently increased in popularity in mainstream studies as it provides an alternative paradigm to positivist traditions of leadership. Conducting this research has been immensely rewarding and has stimulated my intellectual curiosity about the conceptual issues of leadership, as well as developed my understanding of the challenges and rewards of undertaking leadership research through the lens of discourse analysis. I hope this thesis, despite offering only a small snapshot of what really happens in leadership and DM processes, contributes to leadership discourse scholarship and develops knowledge in this area. I also hope my research plays a role in expanding the limited research conducted on leadership discourse in Asia and virtual contexts, and adds not only to the vast scholarship of sociolinguistics and DM research across different disciplines. I furthermore invite future researchers of diverse backgrounds who are interested in leadership and DM to address and test the propositions presented in this study, continue the discussion of these matters, and deepen our insights into the complexities of leadership and DM.

Finally, as leadership advisor and internationally best-selling author Robin Sharma (cited in Jena, 2011: 208) said in his book *The Leader Who Had No Title* :

...you do not have to have a title to be a leader. You just need to be a living human being. That's all it takes because every single one of us alive in the world today has unrecognized powers and disowned potential..

Indeed, one who has '(un)recognized powers and disowned potential' is able to perform several leadership roles, regardless of his or her place in corporate hierarchy. This quote aptly summarises the general picture of DL and DM investigated in this study, promoting the importance of discourse strategies enacted by ordinary members and illustrating that these 'followers' are able to firmly resist and challenge the lead of the formal leaders. The exploration of leadership practices

beyond heroic notions of leadership contributes significantly to current understandings of leadership across disciplines, hence continuing the effort to speculate, improve our knowledge and bring 'fresh air' (Schnurr and Schroeder, 2018: 13) to conceptual, analytical and methodological concepts of leadership research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Transcription conventions

Data was transcribed using a combination basic conversation analysis (Jefferson, 1987) (<http://ca-tutorials.lboro.ac.uk/notation.htm>) and LWP transcription conventions (<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/lwp/>).

word=	No discernible pause between two speakers turn
= word	
(.)	Pause
(xxx)	Unable to transcribe
(())	Other paralinguistic details
>word<	Faster speech
<word>	Slower speech
<u>word</u>	Sounds are louder
↑word	Rise pitch
↓word	Fall pitch
wo:::rd	Sounds stretching
(Jefferson, 1978)	

...//...\...	Simultaneous speech (overlaps)
.../...\...	
[word]	Other information
(LWP transcription conventions)	

Appendix 2 Information sheet



Information Sheet for a Study of Exploring Distributed Leadership in Decision- Making

Date: 16/10/2015

Researcher : Nor Azikin Mohd Omar, Centre of Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick.

Introduction

You are invited to take part in a research project that aims to better understand leadership discourse in decision- making processes. This study will investigate how participants use language to do leadership within a committee team. Data will be collected by recording some meetings, collecting Whatsapp messages and interviews with participants. It is hoped that findings of the study will be useful for providing insights into leadership from the perspective of everyday practices of talk at work. It is anticipated that the findings will be written up in a doctoral thesis, published in academic journals and presented at international conferences.

This research adheres to the University's guidelines on ethics which require that all participants give written consent for their participation in this study.

Recordings

Committee meetings which will be held between October to February 2016 will be video- and audio-taped using two video cameras and an audio tape.

Interviews

The members of the team committee will be interviewed about their experiences at workplace and views on these.

Whatsapp

Whatsapp messages from the committee's Whatsapp group will also be collected and participants are given the option to either delete themselves or instruct the researcher to delete parts of messages that are unsuitable for the study.

Withdrawal

The participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any point of the research without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way. The recordings and all relevant data of the withdrawn participants will be deleted permanently.

Confidentiality

All data will be kept securely and are strictly accessible to the researcher and the supervisors only. Full confidentiality is guaranteed and any information that can identify the participants will be changed or omitted. Sensitive data will not be used for the study and will be deleted from the corpus gathered.

Contact Details

All questions could be directed to the researcher thorough email at n.a.mohd-omar@warwick.ac.uk or by phone/ Whatsapp at 017-9261722.

Appendix 3 Consent form



CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Exploring Distributed Leadership in Decision- making

Name of Researcher: Nor Azikin Mohd Omar

Date: 16/10/2015 (On information sheet)

For the above project which I may keep for my records and have had the opportunity to ask any questions I may have.

I agree to participate in the above study and am willing to (tick as appropriate):

- 1) *be recorded during committee meetings over a period from October to February 2016 ()*
- 2) *be observed during the recorded meetings ()*
- 3) *allow my relevant Whatsapp messages between committee members to be collected ()*
- 4) *be interviewed by the researcher ()*

I understand that my information will be held and processed for the following purposes:

- 1) *fully anonymised excerpts may be included in the PhD thesis*
- 2) *fully anonymised excerpts may be included in academic publications*
- 3) *follow up research by the researcher*

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent if different from Researcher	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix 4 Interview Questions

1. Could you talk me through a typical meeting of your team?
Prompts, if necessary: Who is in charge of organising the meeting? How frequently are the meetings held? How long do they usually last? How is a typical meeting organised? Is there an agenda? Who usually prepare/circulate this?
2. What is your role in the team?
3. Who would you say is in charge of the team? Wha makes you think so?
Prompts, if necessary: Who makes decisions in the team? Do others participate in this? Who makes sure that people stick to the agenda or is it OK not to stick to the agenda? Who usually gives instructions/tells other people what to do? Do team members typically work together or do they rather their tasks individually?
4. What counts as a successful meeting for you?
5. How would you describe the relationship among the members of your team? Can you give an example to illustrate this?
6. What do you like best about working in this team? Can you give an example to illustrate this? Is there anything that you don't particularly like about working with this team?
7. In which other teams at FAN have you worked in the past? How do you compare your experience working in other teams with your experience of working in this team?
8. What would you say if there would be changes in the ways your current team is run?
 - a. What if (name of the team leader) is replaced with somebody else?
 - b. If there were no leader in the team, who do you think will step in? Why?
 - c. What if there were more than one leader in this team? Do you think this would work?
9. To the team leader:
 - a. How would you describe your leadership style?
 - b. What are leadership challenges that you are currently or have faced within the team? Can you give example?
10. To the team member: What are the challenges that you have experienced working with this team?What do you think would be the best ways to overcome the challenges
11. Could you talk me through some of the typical activities that you do with yout team members? Do you spend time together outside office hours?
12. What do you think of the relationship between junior and senior staff at FAN?

13. How is information typically communicated among the team members?
Why do you think people use (communication tool) so frequently/ what is the main purpose of using this?
14. If you could change three things about your team, what would that be?
15. Would you like to add or comment anything to what we have talked about?

Appendix 5 Sample of manual coding (meetings)

00:04:56.4	00:04:59.6	nak bagi extra letters ke			
00:05:00.9	00:05:03.3	so basically we need to decide now	Sarah		
00:05:03.3	00:05:03.4	hm hm			
00:05:03.3	00:05:04.8	on the date for briefing			
00:05:04.8	00:05:05.4	briefing			
00:05:05.0	00:05:06.2	we are going call the teachers	Sarah		
00:05:05.4	00:05:05.5	hm hm			
00:05:06.2	00:05:08.9	Em em tapi before we call out the teachers tu dia kena school kene identify dulu sapa sapa guru pembimbing dia	Sarah		
00:05:14.1	00:05:14.2	ye betul	Eusof		
00:05:14.4	00:05:15.5	sapa guru pembimbing dia	Sarah		
00:05:15.5	00:05:20.1	because they will fax e	Irene		
00:05:20.1	00:05:20.3	fax	Sarah		
00:05:20.3	00:05:20.4	erm borang lampiran er they will bring the lampiran	Irene		
00:05:21.6	00:05:22.9	they that cikgu will bring lampiran D	Sarah		
00:05:22.9	00:05:24.1	hm hm borang kebenaran melantik			
00:05:24.1	00:05:24.3	okay hm hm DOH takpelah sekarang ni kita pilih ah owk	Sarah		
00:05:24.3	00:05:24.4	hm hm	Irene		
00:05:27.6	00:05:32.4	So pilih tarikh lah owk lets check the schedule for teaching practicum NI	Sarah		
00:05:32.4	00:05:40.0	Eh Tak NI YANG LAMA	Irene		
00:05:32.7	00:05:36.1	ha tarikh lama ni?	Sarah		
00:05:36.1	00:05:38.4	aah yang ni kite tukar jugak	Irene		
00:05:38.4	00:05:39.8	o ok ok ok	Sarah		
00:05:39.7	00:05:42.7	yang kak Zana buat haritu yang mane eh? hor yang ni hehehe yang ni	Sarah		
00:05:46.7	00:05:47.5	hmmm			
00:05:47.5	00:06:07.1	lakpe nanti nati kak Sarah bagi kak Sarah minta dengan kak Zana eh ok kita start dulu dengan language camp language camp kita 24 th January 24 th	Sarah		

Mohd Omar, Nor Azikin
EXPLICIT WAY OF INDICATING DECISION-MAKING TO BE MADE

Mohd Omar, Nor Azikin
IMPLICITLY DECISION MADE BY SARAH

Mohd Omar, Nor Azikin
STARTS FINDING THE DATES FOR THE TEACHING PRACTICUM